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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Good Talk

WHY should characters, says Mr. Wells in the preface to "The World of William Clissold," be gutted of their ideas like a disembowelled rabbit before the novelist presents them to his readers? Why should not fictitious characters have real ideas and discuss them? We ask you in return, Mr. Wells, have the majority of novelists ideas worth putting into the heads of their characters, for to tell a story or to handle sex or to build up romantic atmosphere by no means implies the possession of ideas worth talking about. In twenty current novels there is enough philosophical platitudes, stale religiosity, pseudo-science, and trite moralizing to sink an encyclopædia. Even in pretty good novels of the popular variety there is scarcely a hero or heroine who does not have a revelation in the last chapter of some great truth of existence which proves to be an idea familiar to Plato or discarded by Confucius. Once let loose general ideas in the novel and you get pages of the author's latest reading in glands or comparative religion and garbled at that. The biology and psychology which have gone into the novels of the past fifty years have been ninety per cent wrong in inferences and probably sixty per cent in facts, and there is little hope that the physics, mathematics, and economics, which will probably be the next fashionable components, will be any more accurate. A good novelist may know what people will *do* or *feel* or *think* and yet have the most elementary conception of what makes good science differ from bad science or good philosophy from bad. Let us have brainy people by all means in our novels instead of the shrewd narrow wits and primitives beautiful but dumb that at present are so common, but do not ask the novelists to write the sociology or the political thinking of their characters. A novelist's business is primarily not with men's work but with men.

* * *

Mr. Wells naturally desires a franchise. He has ideas; he lives for ideas; and no novelist today can give such an impression of varied, stimulating, highly informed talk. His novels tend more and more to be outlines of human ideas in general, particularly this last one which for two volumes sets idea after idea about everything on a story whose lines are about as conspicuous as the rails in a freight yard crowded with cars of every description. Yet Mr. Wells's ideas are not to be classed with those solemn rediscoveries which are so common in novels. He will have an idea on anything but seldom a trite one, and if he repeats, it is usually himself. There is much thinking in this new novel which is going to prove useful, particularly the brilliant generalization of the trilogy, Vishnu the conservative, Siva the democratic radical, Brahma the creator, which he uses to hold together the general idea of his book. The answer would seem to be that if the novelist has ideas in addition to his power to create character, let him use them by all means. But this needs qualification.

An idea, a book of some considerable scope must have, but is a work of fiction the best place to sew ideas? Cooper thought so and by so doing made sterile one of the greatest romantic imaginations of modern times. Meredith thought so—and now we are reading "Love in a Valley," and, one fears, forgetting his novels. Wells thinks so now and stretches his shimmering talk till it hides the structure of his book. What difference, if it is a good book? But it might be a better book, and the ideas more just. When an author puts a thesis to be proved into fiction he stacks the cards. If it were a history he would have to document it, weigh it, prove it. But in fiction the author's creation says "I thought this," "I saw this," "I know this," and we are beguiled into belief. We are persuaded of the truth of a great argument, and in the case of Mr. Wells it is a great argument in which he passionately believes, and then the next morning we say, but after all it was only a novel! In short, this transfer of ideas by story-telling which Wells defends is a form of advertising worthy of the genius of Dickon Clissold, effective, interesting, but less convincing than the "critique of our times" which Mr. Wells might have written instead.

There are, of course, "Pilgrim's Progress" and

(*Continued on page* 151)

Sonnet

By DAVID MCCORD

LET the great quiet lie between my hands,
Let me cup them round it as I cup
The quiet, starry water and lift it up,
Jealously running like a sift of sands.
Let the low music blow across the lands,
Shy and unsyllabled as the turn of spring;
The song is softer, and its lessening
Goes like the ghost of lovely sarabands.
Let the great quiet lie within my hands,
The hour deepen, and the day surrender;
Beyond the gradual shore the sea expands,
And west the fires burn with a slow splendor:
These shall my heart consider not the less,
That of them all was born in quietness.

This Week

"My Heresy." Reviewed by *Phillips E. Osgood.*

"Hilda Ware." Reviewed by *Grace Frank.*

"She Shall Have Music." Reviewed by *Louis Kronenberger.*

"Chevrons." Reviewed by *Stephen Graham.*

"History of England." Reviewed by *Walter S. Hayward.*

The Bowling Green. By *Christopher Morley.*

Next Week, or Later

Close-Up of Poe. By *Carl Schreiber.*

Humor of the Transsiberian. By *John Dos Passos.*

Willa Cather's "My Mortal Enemy." Reviewed by *Lee Wilson Dodd.*

Adonis*

By PAUL VALERY

THERE clings to the name of La Fontaine a rumor of day-dreams and idleness, a general murmur of vacancy and perpetual distraction, which naturally suggests the idea of some fabulous creature, always infinitely ready to let himself drift along the gentle current of his life. We see him vaguely, framed in one of those inner pictures which are never far from our thoughts, although it is many years since they took shape, and although they were formed from the first stories and illustrations that we knew.

Perhaps, from our earliest childhood, this mere name of La Fontaine, the fountain, has permanently clothed the imaginary figure of a poet with a vaguely ambiguous sense of depth and coolness, and with no one knows what magic borrowed from living waters. A similarity in names will often give rise to a myth. From a pun, which is a species of adultery, great gods were sometimes born.

There is, in any case, someone who dreams, and lets himself naïvely drift through life. We tend to place him in a park, or in some enchanting landscape where he seeks the lovely shadows. We give him the spellbound attitude of a hermit who is never really alone: perhaps because he exults with himself at the peace which surrounds him; perhaps because he gossips with the ant, with Reynard the Fox, or with some other of those animals which flourished under Louis XIV and spoke in such pure French.

If the beasts of the field abandon him—for even the wisest are fickle, disturbed easily by the slightest thing—he turns toward the valleys basking in the sun, where he listens to the voices of the reeds, the nymphs, the mill. He lends them his silence, from which they make a sort of symphony.

He is faithful only to all the delights of the day, but they must give themselves freely; he will not pursue or retain them by force; and one might say that his destiny is content to spin the sweets of every moment into silken threads, and fragilely weave them into infinite hours.

To such a dreamer, nothing is likened more easily than the idle cloud in which his glance confides; to watch it softly drifting across the skies diverts him insensibly from wife and child and self; he forgets his duties as it bears him on; he is freed from all consequences, excused from all forethought. For what could be vainer than wishing to outrun the breeze which carries us—unless, perhaps, always to claim responsibility for the movements of a mist?

* * *

But a poem of six hundred verses with regular rhymes, like his "Adonis;" such a long succession of graces; a thousand difficulties overcome, and a thousand delights so caught in the length of an inviolable web that they touch and are forced to melt into one another, giving the final illusion of a vast and varied tapestry; all this hidden labor which the lover of poetry considers, as it were, by holding the tapestry against the light, seeking what lies beneath its artifices, turned aside from his search neither by the movement of the hunt nor the vicissitudes of love, and beginning by degrees to admire as his mind succeeds in reconstructing the poet's

*The following study is to constitute one of the essays in "Variety," by Paul Valery, shortly to appear in an English translation by Malcolm Cowley, from the press of Harcourt, Brace & Co.

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skill:—all this makes him renounce forever the first and primitive idea which he had formed of La Fontaine.

Let us no longer believe that some mere amateur of gardens, a man who loses both his stockings like his time; partly inspired and partly addlepated; a bit silly, a bit waggish, a bit sententious; dispensing a justice based on proverbs to the little beasts which surround him—that such a man could be the real author of "Adonis." Take heed that the carelessness, here, is studied; the indolence is deliberate; the ease is the height of art. As for naïvety, it must be ruled out of the question: I am convinced that an art and purity so well sustained exclude all thought of idleness or good-natured simplicity.

* * *

A simple heart is no equipment for a politician, but neither are dreams and distractions the tools with which words are combined into such rare and precious shapes. The true condition of a true poet is absolutely distinct from the state of dream. In the former I can see nothing but voluntary researches, a struggle to render his thoughts more flexible, and the perpetual triumph of sacrifice.

The man, even, who tries to describe his dreams must be infinitely awake. If you wish to imitate, with some degree of exactness, the grotesque inconsistencies of the weak dreamer which you lately were; through the depths of your mind to pursue this pensive fall of the soul like a dead leaf through the vague immensity of memory, do not hope to succeed without an extreme concentration, which will lead to your discovering that which exists only at the price of such concentration.

Whoever says exactitude and style is invoking the opposite of dream; and whoever encounters these in a work of art should infer that its author expended all the time and labor which are necessary to prevent the permanent dissipation of ideas. The fairest, like the others, all are shadows; and the kingdom of ghosts, in this case, precedes the kingdom of the living. It was never a mere pastime to snatch a little grace, or clarity, or permanence from the confused flow of image, nor to change the transient into the enduring. And the more timid, the more fugitive is one's prey, the more concentration and force of will are needed to render it eternally present, in its eternally fleeting attitude.

Even a fabulist is far from resembling that negligent creature we were pleased in our negligence to imagine. Phædrus is all elegance; the La Fontaine of the "Fables" is full of artifice. It was not enough to lie under a tree and listen to the magpie's chatter or the shadowy laughter of the raven; something more was needed to make them speak so gracefully. For there is a strange abyss between the speech of birds or foliage or ideas as it comes to us, and the same speech as we set it down; the interval is beyond conception.

The mysterious difference which exists between even the clearest impression or invention and its finished expression becomes the greatest possible—and hence the most remarkable—when the author subjects his diction to the laws of regular verse. This is a convention which has been very little understood. I shall discuss it briefly.

Liberty is such a seductive goddess; she is so particularly seductive to poets; she lays hold of their imagination by dint of such plausible, and generally such solid reasons; she is clothed so demurely with novelty and wisdom, and, while hiding their drawbacks, she tempts us with so many advantages to abandon the ancient rules, to consider their absurdities, to reduce them to the mere observance of natural laws of the soul and the sense of hearing, that one hardly knows at first what to answer. Can one even suggest that this charmer is a dangerous friend to carelessness, when she can so easily show us an overwhelming quantity of very bad, very facile, and terribly regular verses? It is true that an equal quantity of irregular verses are just as detestable. This accusation flies back and forth between the two camps; the best soldiers of one party are the weaklings of the other; and these weaklings so resemble each other that it is impossible to say why they should be divided.

Hence, even if a choice were absolutely necessary, it would be difficult to make. As for me, I think that both sides are right, and everyone must do as he sees fit. But I cannot help but be puzzled by the obstinate fashion in which the poets of all times, down to the days of my youth, loaded themselves with voluntary chains. It is difficult to explain why this servitude was hardly perceived for centuries, and then was found unbearable. What is the reason for this immemorial obedience to commandments which seem to us so futile? Why should the greatest men, whose success depended so much on giving the highest degree of liberty to their spirits, persist so long in an error? Will it be necessary to solve this enigma by a paradox, as the fashion has been since the decay of logic, and to think that we have an *instinct* for the *artificial?* The two words are utterly incongruous.

Another thing surprises me. Our epoch has seen the birth of almost as many prosodies as poets, or rather a few more systems than individuals, for some individuals brought forth several systems. However, during the same period, industry and the sciences were pursuing the opposite policy. They created uniform measures. They adopted units and realized them in standards the use of which was prescribed by laws and treaties; whereas every poet, taking his own nature for a collection of modules, was trying to establish his own body, the personal period of his rhythm, and the duration of his breath, as absolute types. Each made a universal diapason of his ear, a universal chronometer of his heart.

In this way poets were running the risk of being poorly understood, poorly read, poorly declaimed; or at least of being understood in a fashion they never expected. This risk is always very great. I should not say that a misinterpretation is always to our disadvantage, or that a curved mirror never adds to the beauty of our work. However, those who dread the uncertainty of communication between writers and readers will certainly find that the fixed metres and more or less artificial symmetries of traditional verse have the advantage of limiting this risk very simply—let us say, if you wish, very coarsely.

As for the tyranny of these rules, it is no greater, in itself, than the tyranny of language, syntax or vocabulary.

I might carry the apology a little further. I do not think it impossible to give this convention and these so contestable rules a singular value of their own. To write regular verses doubtless involves one's submission to an alien law, rather absurd, always harsh, and sometimes barbarously cruel; this law destroys an infinite number of fine possibilities, but at the same time it suggests a multitude of distant and totally unexpected thoughts. (As for the latter, I shall admit that half of them were not worth the trouble of being born, and that the other half, on the contrary, bring us enchanting discoveries and unknown harmonies; so that loss and gain are cancelled off, and I need not discuss them further.) But all the innumerable beauties which will remain forever in the mind, all the potential graces which metre, the obligation to rhyme, and the incomprehensible rule of hiatus definitely prevent from being realized, seem to constitute an immense loss, over which one can truly lament. Let us try instead to rejoice: the philosopher should always attempt to change a loss into the appearance of a loss. If only we reflect, if we go more deeply into a subject, we often succeed in making our first ideas of loss and gain, in ideal matters, seem absurd.

A hundred figures of clay, however perfectly moulded, do not present the same clear idea as a single figure of marble almost as beautiful. The first are more fragile than ourselves; the second is a little more enduring. We imagine how it resisted the sculptor; it did not wish to emerge from its crystallized shadows. Long days were the price of this mouth and of these arms. An artist struck thousands of rebounding blows, each a slow question of the future form. The dense and pure shadow fell in splinters, fled in glittering dust. A man advanced against a stone; time was his tool; he crept painfully along the side of a mistress profoundly slumbering in the future; he traced the contours of this creature he had slowly made his own; at last she detached herself from the mass of the universe and the vagueness of an idea. Here at last she stands, a monster of grace and hardness, born, for an indeterminate time, from the energy and perseverance of a single thought. These so rebellious unions are the most precious of all. Take this weakness for sign of a great soul: that it wishes to draw from itself some object which will astonish, resemble, and confound itself, and which will be more pure, more incorruptible, and to some degree more necessary than the very being which was its author.

But the great soul produces of itself only the mixture of its facility and richness, between the two of which it can hardly distinguish; it pays back good and evil; it does what it wishes, but wishes only those actions of which it is capable; it is free but not sovereign. You must try, O Psyche, to exhaust all your facility against an obstacle; confront the obduracy of granite, chafe against your difficulties, and for a time despair. See how your vain enthusiasms grow cold, and your intentions are baffled. Perhaps you are not yet disciplined, and still prefer your self-indulgence to your resolution. Do you find this stone too hard, or dream of something pliable as wax, and the obedience of clay? But follow the path of your exasperated thought, and soon you will meet with this infernal inscription: *There is nothing so lovely as that which does not exist.*

The laws of a strict prosody are the artifice which endows our natural speech with the qualities of a resistant matter, foreign to our souls and deaf, as it were, to our desires. If these laws were not partly unreasonable, and if they did not excite us to revolt, they would be totally absurd. We can no longer do everything, once they are accepted; we can no longer say everything, and to say anything whatsoever, it no longer suffices to conceive the idea strongly, to be full of it, intoxicated with it, to allow a figure already finished in our absence to escape from the mystical moment. To a god alone is reserved the ineffable confusion of thought and act. As for us, we must toil, we must learn painfully to know their difference. We must pursue words which do not always exist, and chimerical resemblances; we must maintain ourselves in the midst of impotence, laboring to unite sounds and meanings, and in daylight creating one of those nightmares which exhaust the dreamer when he struggles endlessly to equalize two phantoms whose lines are as unstable as his own. And so we must passionately wait, change hours and days as one would change a tool—and wish, wish. . . . And even, not wish excessively.

Being free today of all obligatory force and all false necessity, these old inflexible laws have no other virtue than to define, and define very simply, an absolute world of expression. This at least is the new meaning I find in them. We have resolved to subject nature—I mean to say the language—to other rules than its own; they are unnecessary, but they are ours; and we even carry our resolution to the point of no longer deigning to invent them; we accept these rules such as they are.

They form a sharp division between that which exists of itself and that which specially exists because of ourselves alone. Here is something strictly human; a decree. But our delights do not perish, nor do our emotions languish, when subjected to this degree; they are both multiplied and created by conventional disciplines. Gamblers might serve for example. Consider the pain they are caused and the ardor with which they are fired by their curious systems and the fantastic restrictions they place on their acts. They are absolutely convinced that the little ivory ball is influenced by their placing a bet in a certain square; they feel magnetic fields and invisible forces which the laws of physics do not recognize. This magnetism disappears with the game. The excessive concentration which had kept it in existence for so long a time loses its nature and drifts away like a dream. . . . The reality of dreams exists in man alone.

* * *

Understand me clearly. I do not say that "pathless delight" is not the principle and very aim of the poet's art. I do not disparage the resplendent gift which our life makes to our consciousness when, with one sudden gesture, it pours forth a thousand memories. However, since the beginnings of literature, there has been no chance discovery or collection of such discoveries which has seemed to constitute a work of art.

I only wished to show that all this tyranny, obligatory metres, rhymes, fixed forms, when adopted once for all and opposed to ourselves, possessed a philosophic beauty of its own. These chains which tighten at every movement of our genius remind us, instantly, of all the contempt which is the just portion of that familiar chaos called, by the vulgar, *thought,* without their being aware that its natural conditions are no less accidental, no less futile, than those of a charade.

Conscious poetry is the art of a profound sceptic. It demands that we take extraordinary liberties with the whole body of our ideas and sensations. The gods, graciously, give us a first verse *for nothing;* but it is our task to fashion the second, which must harmonize with the first and not be too unworthy of

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its supernatural elder. All the resources of thought and experience are required to render it comparable to the verse which was a gift.

Only a singularly observant mind, rich in delicacies and researches, could be the author of "Adonis." The La Fontaine who was able, a little later, to write such admirable varied verses, was able to write them only at the end of twenty years devoted to symmetrical verses; "Adonis" is the best of these exercises. Meanwhile he was giving the observers of his own time a spectacle of naïvety and idleness which, turned naïvely and idly into a tradition, has come down to our own days.

Literary history, like other histories, is woven of diversely gilded legends. The most fallacious are necessarily due to the most faithful witnesses. What is more misleading than the accounts of those truthful men who confine themselves to telling what they saw, as if we had seen it ourselves? But precisely how are we affected by what we see? One of the most serious and logical men I ever knew generally appeared to be the soul of levity; a second nature clothed him with nonsense. And our minds are like our bodies in this respect; whatever they feel to be most important, they wrap in mystery and hide from themselves; they distinguish and defend it by placing it at a depth. Everything which matters is well hidden; witnesses and documents obscure it; acts and works are expressly designed to disguise it.

Did Racine himself know where he found the inimitable voice, the delicate pattern of inflection, the transparent mode of discourse, all the qualities which make him Racine, and without which he would be reduced to that inconsiderable personage of whom biographers relate a great number of facts, hardly more true of him than of ten thousand other Frenchmen? The lessons which literary history claim to teach rarely bear on the secret of how poems are made. Everything takes place inside the artist, as if the observable events of his life had only a superficial influence on his works. The one fact of importance—the very act of the muses—is independent of his adventures, his kind of life, his incidents and everything which might figure in a biography. Everything which history can observe is important.

The essentials of his work are indefinable circumstances, occult encounters, facts are visible to one man only, and others which are so easy or familiar to this one man that he disregards them. By examining ourselves we can easily discover that these incessant and impalpable events are the solid matter of our true personality.

Each one of the beings who create is half certain, half uncertain of his own powers; he feels a known and unknown whose incessant relations and unexpected exchanges finally give birth to some production. I do not know what I shall do, yet my mind thinks that it knows itself, and I build on this knowledge; I count on it; I call it myself. But *I shall surprise myself;* if I doubted this, I should be nothing. I know that I shall be astonished by this or that thought which will soon occur to me—and yet I demand this surprise; I build and count on it, as I count on my certainty. I hope for something unexpected which I shall create; I have need of my known and my unknown.

How then can we conceive of the true author of a great work? But such a personality simply does not exist. How can the Self be defined if it changes sides and opinions so often in the course of my work that the work is disfigured under my hands; if every repentance results in immense modifications; and if a thousand accidents of memory, attention, or sensation, occurring to my mind, appear at last in my finished work as the essential ideas and original objects of my efforts? And yet all these accidents are surely of myself, since my strength and weakness, my repetitions, my mannerisms, my lights and shadows can always be recognized in whatever falls from my hands.

Let us despair of having clear vision in these matters, and soothe ourselves with an image. I can imagine this poet, his mind full of ruses and resources, pretending to sleep in the imaginary center of his still uncreated work, better to capture that moment of his own greatest power which is his prey. In the vague depth of his eyes, all the forces of his desire and all the springs of his instinct are stretched taut. And there, intent on the chances from which she selects her nourishment; there, very obscure in the midst of the nets which she has woven out of words, and the secret lyres whose interwoven strings hum vaguely, a mysterious Arachne, muse of the hunt, watches in silence.

Setting Out to Be a Problem

MY HERESY. By William Montgomery Brown, D.D. New York: The John Day Company. 1926.

Reviewed by Phillips Endecott Osgood
St. Mark's, Minneapolis

BISHOP BROWN'S case is not unknown to the public. It might be difficult to get an unbiased jury for his book. Whatever the reader's reaction to the Bishop's case, there will be material aplenty in his Apologia to ratify it. No book review merely on the merits of the book as a book will satisfy anyone; no personal animadversions to the case it presents will content any but the accidental few who happen to feel identically. What then can a reviewer do?

The importance of a grain of dust in the eye is out of all proportion to its size. Bishop Brown's case is very much in the smarting eyes of some who care for the sanity of church policy in these days of that revalidation inevitable to every mental generation. Although the good Bishop has been involved in the problem of the limits of credal interpretation, is it as novel a problem as he thinks and is he the unique standard-bearer of a new era of liberty for faith without standards? It may even be that his hectic newspaper-sensation-days may prove a handicap, since the type of interest created by intense

Illustration by Edmund Dulac for "The Green Lacquer Pavilion," by Helen Beauclerk (Doran)

headlines seldom survives the next nine days' wonder and the serious-minded have been prejudiced to indifference. If anything will survive to compel thorough weighing of the fundamental problem involved, which had scant chance for appreciation during the days when the whirlwind swirled, it will be the still small voice of this consecutive and pointed story.

This possibility would be greater if the Bishop did not still succumb so frequently to the temptation to be audacious. He chuckles at his cleverness at embarrassment. He is almost impish in his sallies. "I was well aware that I had teased the good bishops! 'Communism and Christianism' might have passed unnoticed," he says, "if I had not adorned it with a picture of myself in full Episcopal robes. Also, when the Bishops first thought of trying me and decided not to do so I decorated subsequent editions with a cartoon which represented myself as a porcupine and my fellow bishops as a group of dogs who obviously wanted to bite me but could see no place to take hold without serious discomfort." Solely as a literary criticism, not as a controversial one, any successful public speaker can admonish, "Beware of a sense of humor which brings in jokes in the midst of serious argument. Your quips will get all the attention and make it of the wrong sort. The demand for wit gets too easily out of hand." This book may provide too many laughs to be as successful as the Bishop really desires in forcing a fundamental and serious question. Such chapter headings as "The Importance of being Smug," and "Doctrine, Doctrine? Who's got the Doctrine?" are perhaps tactical, but to end a chapter with the passage about his date of birth being confused with that of a calf on the farm, so that "since the records were erroneous, perhaps the orders were not indelible; if so, the bishops should explain that it was the calf, not William Montgomery Brown they deposed,"—this does not help to the pondering of the problem of symbolic interpretation of Creed. For the Bishop has a case. Whether we think it valid or not, it is, shorn of its epigrams and audacities, a real case. De spite the fact that he says, "I was well aware that I had no case. If anybody could be unfrocked for heresy, I could certainly be. Had I been merely an extreme liberal, I could not have served as I did. . . . I was not only a one hundred per cent heretic but temperamentally I was as far away from the ecclesiastical organization as it was possible to get." Yet the Confession of Faith he writes is full of fervor and nobility. Those four pages are too fine to be obscured by the climax that the newspapers wrote of the *scared* ministry and let the type-setting error stand. There is a text that can be translated "the zeal of God but not according to tact." Does it have bearing? Solely, of course, on the question of technique.

Belief is not so essential as character; the most impeccable doctrine goes for a little with the man who will not live by it. Mistaken doctrines have been held by many a saintly man. Bishop Brown is a gentle and unselfish person; he is more unquestionably Christian than his opinions are. This should be in the background of the reader's mind. The most vital of all issues, that of character, is not under fire at all. Even those who reluctantly came to the conclusion that they must disenfranchise him from the church they represented, honored his goodness.

The Bishop makes much in the book of the fact that the court did not put into definite words any standard of dogma as criterion for the faithful. Could they really phrase that "Canon of Common Sense" which is the most dominant of all the canons? Common Sense is an instinct. Most of our puzzles are decided by its sheer intuition and emotion; then we ratify our decision with such reasons as we can muster. The decision, however, is not dependent on them. By some such subconscious findings we may be led to our reactions to this sparkling book, going by our feeling that there just must be some standard beyond which "symbolic interpretation" cannot be stretched. Like St. Patrick on the shore *ubi ultra nemo erat.* A doctrine of relativity that makes everything relative to some other moving thing unsettles us; we would not care to live in that land where the Caterpillar told Alice that he made words mean what he wanted them to, since the only question was which should be master. Bishop Brown's dexterity of symbolism makes the cornerstone assertions of Christianity, continuously under all recognized interpretations its essence, amazingly different.

Granted that absolute and literal use of ancient words may by now be impossible with only and accurately the original connotations, nevertheless a "Christianism" with a belief in God analogous to a belief in Uncle Sam for the patriot and with explicit denial of the historicity of the Carpenter of Nazareth seems not to be credal. Of the technical questions of church polity the church must judge. This witty but seriously intended book is an appeal to the higher court of the public which acts by simple reactions, priding itself on common sense.

This Apologia of the man who "set out to be a problem" may induce quieter meditation on the point at issue after its covers are closed and the brilliancies are not in the way of thought. But perhaps of all this no book review should have ventured. "Peccavi," perhaps.

Good Talk

(*Continued from page* 149)

"Utopia" and "The Faerie Queene" on the other side. But these are high and doubtful cases where the ideas were simple and the method very effective. And there is Shaw, whose practice Wells is clearly following, putting his ideas into the covers of a novel as Shaw puts his into plays. Yet the time may have come for Shaw to speak more directly and for Mr. Wells to cease inventing puppets to carry on his cerebrations. The public that must have a wrapping of fiction for everything they read will get ideas wrong anyway. What we want is "The Table Talk of H. G. Wells and his Friends." It will be a good book—and, though a bit shorter, singularly like this last novel.

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Facing the Situation

HILDA WARE. By L. ALLEN HARKER. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1926. $2.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

IN the gallery of excellent portraits of women who have seen through their pedestaled husbands, Hilda Ware's deserves the place of honor. She and Maggie Shand and Mrs. Waddington of Wyck —and perhaps Catharine Parr and Bluebeard's last wife—might then step from their frames some day and greet each other with the understanding smile born of what every woman knows. Hilda's would be the most understanding of all, for hers would be tinctured with sadness. But this admirable novel is something more than the portrait of a lady: it is the life-history of a situation far from uncommon today, and the historian has treated it judicially, humanely, and with a perfect sense of both its comic and tragic implications. Mrs. Harker writes with humor, charm, and an almost uncanny comprehension of human nature.

Hilda Ware's young daughter, Dulcie, once said of her mother, "She wants us to be rather fine . . . the sort of person one trusts. . . . She wants us to have all the good times there are, but one knows that deep down she's not easygoing." Hilda is devoutly religious and "deep down she's not easygoing," but toward her husband—a somewhat whimsical and irresponsible creature, tenderly affectionate and altogether lovable—she is both tolerant and indulgent. She spares him every concern with the machinery of living and takes upon herself any boring task that might interfere with his comfort. Naturally, it is to her that he turns when his secretary gets on his nerves, a secretary designed by nature to be dim and negative but who insists on being bright and positive, a woman who wears high heels and treads them over, writes "obscene" for "obscure," and who, like all his secretaries, adores him. To Hilda falls the duty of dismissing the objectionable Miss Jennings and Hilda it is who secures Rachel Stroud in her place. But with Rachel comes catastrophe.

For the new secretary is no exception to the rule: she, too, develops Prossy's complaint, and this time the middle-aged Geoffrey, admiring the girl's superb sincerity and her infallible instinct for perfection, yielding to the illusion of youth that comes to him from kissing her young lips,—this time Geoffrey succumbs utterly. He wants Rachel as passionately as she wants him and, counting the cost, he is ready to leave his wife, the children he loves, and his beautiful home in order to possess her. He tells Hilda that he can no longer live with her, that he is going away with Rachel, and begs her to be kind to the girl, that is, to divorce him so that Rachel may become his wife. And Hilda, struggling with her outraged feelings and her religious scruples, finally consents. She reproaches herself with certain sins of omission in her relations with her husband, she reproaches herself for not having fulfilled all her responsibilities toward Rachel, and, descending neither to bitterness nor to mawkishness, she resolves to make the situation as easy for Geoffrey and the girl as possible. As she says, you can't unlove people in a minute, no matter what they do, and although her heart is broken, she continues to love Geoffrey with the pieces.

* * *

Her problem, Geoffrey's problem, Rachel's very real problem, and the problem of the two delicious Ware children, each is presented so simply, unobtrusively, and limpedly that one forgets how much skill must have gone into devising the scenes that bring these people so vividly before us. Hilda battling with her conscience and her love, facing her children squarely and smiling crookedly at the censure and sympathy of her friends; Geoffrey, ill, oppressed by Rachel's anxious, adoring eyes, her fussiness, her inability to make him comfortable, and his own inability to meet her needs and ideals; Rachel wrestling with a disdainful cook and scrubbing cupboards that offend Geoffrey's delicate nose by reeking of the previous occupant's chypre and patchouli; Dulcie saying to Hilda in horror and despair, "Mummy! Will Rachel be my stepmother? I thought you could only have a stepmother if your own mother was dead"—every scene is a work of art that manages to create the impression of reality.

And Mrs. Harker's humor, less mischievous and whimsical than Barrie's, less ironic than May Sinclair's, is without sting. It flashes relevantly here and there, brightening at every turn a theme inherently tragic. It would be unfair even to hint at the end of the story, but to one reader at least it is as inevitable as the successive stages in the tale itself and in the developing characters of its protagonists.

"Hilda Ware" may be enjoyed merely because it is an entertaining novel involving delightful people placed in a charming setting; it may well be pondered as a sane, sage, and witty contribution to the various discussions of divorce; it will surely delight those who appreciate the technical perfection of a novelist, able, with no appearance of effort, to accomplish precisely what she set out to accomplish.

A Critic's Novel

SHE SHALL HAVE MUSIC. By ALYSE GREGORY. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1926. $2.

Reviewed by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

PERHAPS the highest compliment one can pay Miss Gregory's first novel is to say that one feels the need of judging it by the strictest and most exacting standards one recognizes. Her already assured place in contemporary writing as a critic and stylist, and her calm, detached approach to "She Shall Have Music" demand something less indulgent than the usual phrases of encouragement one shows to a "promising" first-novelist. It is therefore unfortunate that Miss Gregory's novel, judged by a severe criterion, must be accounted more a failure than a success.

One feels that in part at least Miss Gregory's failure to have achieved a fine novel is due to the type of writing she has been known by. "She Shall Have Music" bears evidence of having too often succumbed to the temptations of the critic and stylist in her, of having too seldom conquered the difficulties of the novelist. Perhaps this is a fault due to Miss Gregory's immediate background, perhaps it is something not so remediable—a question of temperament. In any case the merits of this book are negative, never positive. It lacks the creative instinct, the creative illusion of reality: meticulous in structure and punctilious in style, it shows almost every talent save the novelist's. The poet is present, in images and a fatal abundance of similes; the prose stylist is present, in long and elaborate sentences; the critic is present, in clear and smooth analyses; the satirist is present, however heavy and banal, in the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Pennington Brown; but the novelist is present in the sense only of recognizing his duties, not of fulfilling them. There are fine and subtle qualities to "She Shall Have Music" which give it a certain value and a certain distinction, but they are not the qualities to make it a valuable or distinctive novel.

* * *

Fiction can be written, as Henry James perhaps has proved, with a finer texture and a more subtle flavor than the life it is supposed to represent, but it can only be written so with a very great talent, and even then it is largely a matter of compensations. Henry James, at least, besides the compensations of subtlety and refinement, offered a psychological achievement of real importance to the novel, to the proper *function* of the novel; but Miss Gregory does not. In Sylvia Brown she had, one feels, a character with whom she was sympathetic and whom she understood; but she does not make Sylvia live. The portrait, through the refinements and apperceptions of Miss Gregory's treatment, succeeds in being a passable, perhaps even a good portrait; but it fails absolutely to be a person. It fails also to be a significant portrait: Sylvia's experiences have no cumulative effect upon the reader. And she cannot survive, could not though she were a far better character survive, the unreal and almost silly final scene she is forced to take part in.

Miss Gregory has something to gain, if she means to write other novels, by losing some of her critical and stylistic graces and distinctions. This book is not over-written, but surely its fastidious style and smooth, chiselled analyses do at times exist for their own sake, and usurp a place that character and incident and drama ought to have. The dialogue is as bad as I remember it to be in any contemporary novel: stilted, literary, unconvincing. Even the other prose, beautiful as it often is, is not the best prose: one has the right to challenge so expert a writer as Miss Gregory when she allows clauses to dangle in a fashion too absurd to be pardonable, and rarefies language to the point of saying: "It is like a sword *lain* on moss."

What Price Glory?

CHEVRONS. By LEONARD H. NASON. New York: George H. Doran. 1926.

Reviewed by STEPHEN GRAHAM

THERE have not been many novels made about the great war. Wilfrid Ewart's "Way of Revelation" and Don Passos's book stand out apart. But possibly Mr. Nason's "Chevrons" could be put with these. It is an excellent book, colorful, revelatory, and vivacious. Without love-interest it nevertheless holds one from cover to cover and it is evidently the fruit of a tremendous personal experience. Perhaps most comfortable people do not care now to face the truth of the war and the share in its sufferings which was the lot of the private soldiers in the A. E. F. We spell war as Glory—Heroism—Victory, and that is a gratifying blend of ideas. But Mr. Nason seems to spell it Callousness—Ferocity—Nonentity.

The fine description of the promiscuous disorganized American attack with its blunders, its appalling tomfoolery of green officers, its amazing bravery, resource, enduring, and suffering make one wonder why no great personal story has yet been written about the retreat of General Gough's army facing the terrible and brilliant onslaught of the Germans in March, 1918. Something epical could be made from it.

* * *

There was little to choose in the lot of the private soldier on any front, but on the whole the doughboys suffered more than the British or the French in 1918. This fact may have been hidden because it was thought discreditable. But it was due not to any national defect but sheerly to inexperience. Pershing's great army was an improvisation and as such was not fitted to be ranged against the foe. It turned the scale in the Great War but it did so because of the moral force behind it.

A little of what these first levies went through Mr. Nason describes unforgetably. Special attention, I think, should be directed towards the adventures of his hero in hospital. His treatment will seem to be too hideously callous and the story be considered exceptional. But it was characteristic. Those who wish the American army well in any future war have some valuable lessons to learn from this novel. No one believes that the soldier should be mollycoddled but there is a care which is his national due especially when he is shot through the stomach. More devotion to duty and self-sacrifice was needed on the part of the hospital staff. The discipline of those in charge of the wounded needed to be sterner and the choice of nurses a great deal more selective.

* * *

As one who served as a private soldier in the British army I hope this novel will be published in England as well as here, for the sake of the picture it gives of what the ordinary American soldier went through. Wilson's speeches obscured a lot of reality and it is not yet grasped that behind the word-fog there was a great and very poignant experience. Nothing made America more unpopular than the idea that America won the war—an idea given vent to mostly by those who did not fight. I think Sergeant Eadie and his comrades were more humble. They must have felt that the greatest fact of the war was the one most overlooked—the price paid. Get this book and read it—that will mean more than putting flowers on the graves of unknown soldiers.

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The Epic of a Mood

NIGGER HEAVEN. By CARL VAN VECHTEN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1926. $2.50.

Reviewed by ERIC WALROND

"NIGGER HEAVEN" is the epic of a mood. At the outset there is much in it to excite and erupt, be one black or white, for it abounds in objectivity and truth. A deeply subjective study, from an exotic Nordic viewpoint, of an ebony Paris, it yet has its moments of racial fidelity and abiding reality. Here, despite a deceptive prologue, is no low-lifed darkey cabaret tale; no plaintive Negro tragedy of flight into virgin Northern wastes. Here is no jazz pæan to the musty rodents of an Upper Fifth Avenue basement. Mr. Van Vechten's concern is of a soberer kind. With the mantle of a showman and the sagacity of a journalist he has anticipated the mob and enthusiastically explored the glimmering summits of High Harlem. There he found, shrouded and gay, a Negro dream-world enchanting in its bewilderments. Its complex vastness, its eternal varieties left him excited and chaotic. His sympathies, however, following a tradition begun in "The Blind Bow-Boy" and "The Tattooed Countess," took him above the "lower Negro depths" to an austere colored upper crust.

Going above One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street, Mr. Van Vechten was careful to be armed. His coat was of sparkling mail; his passions studied, distilled. But Striver's Row is the one flexible spot in the engaging chrysalis that is Harlem and yielded much in excess of Mr. Van Vechten's wildest dreams. Among its dark-skinned aristocracy he expected to find, presumably, evidences of "culture," the source of jazz, swaggering opulence, "instinctive" gayety; but hardly, I gather, heirlooms of a pale, dim ancestral past, mulatto aversion to black a dominant tribal spirit, snobbishness, delightful crudity, neuroses, intellectuality. For all these Mr. Van Vechten found, and more.

* * *

From the viewpoint of style and fulness "Nigger Heaven" is Mr. Van Vechten's finest job. The plot, which is subordinated to a very serious inquiry into the social riddle of Harlem, hinges on the loves and literary aspirations of Byron Kasson, a young Negro college graduate who wants to write. Byron is strong-willed and phlegmatic. He is desirous of creativity, but at every turn is jostled and enraged by a rising feeling of racial inequity. In delving into Byron's motives though, I often find Mr. Van Vechten at sea. He leads us at the outset to believe that Byron is burdened with none of the reticences of social caste. But as soon as Byron's defeat and unsuccess are to be accounted for, "he-treated-me-that-way-because-I-am-a-Negro" is dragged in. It did not occur to his creator that Byron might have been charged with that spirit of unreasoning revolt which is the portion of most immature creative beings the world over. If the element of time in the book was intended to be A. D. 1900, Byron's psychosis would have been plausible, but today it is notoriously untrue.

Almost as illogical as Byron's primitive behavior is the idea of his regard for Mary Love. In essence she would provide a fine study of a mulatto girl who is more white in spirit than black, but etched against a background of such scintillating colors she creates a mood of unsympathetic discord.

> Savages! Savages at heart! And she had lost or forfeited her birthright, this primitive birthright which was so valuable and important an asset, a birthright that all the civilized races were struggling to get back to—this fact explained the art of a Picasso or a Stravinsky. To be sure, she, too, felt this African beat—it completely aroused her emotionally—but she was conscious of feeling it. This love of drums, of exciting rhythms, this naïve delight in glowing color—the color that exists only in cloudless, tropical climes—this warm, sexual emotion, all these were hers only through a mental understanding. With Olive these qualities were instinctive; also with Howard; even with Hester, to some extent; Adora throbbed with this passionate instinct—that was the real reason Mary's heart went out to her. Why, Mary asked herself, is this denied to me?

Her's is one of the eternal tragedies of the borderline. In Harlem (she is a librarian there) she is unable to adapt herself to the society the refuge frontier affords, and is too dependent a personality to risk the adventure of "crossing."

How different is Lasca! Lasca is remorseless, impulsive, divine.

> Negroes aren't any worse off than anybody else. They're better off, if anything. They have the same privileges that white women had before the bloody fools got the ballot. They're considered irresponsible like children and treated with a special fondness. Why, in Harlem one is allowed to do thousands of things that one would get arrested for downtown. . . . I've never been bothered very much about the fact that I'm colored. It doesn't make any difference to me and I've never thought very much about it. I do just what I want to.

One day in Central Park she rescues Byron from one of his fits of despair and takes him to her apartment. The boy is ecstatic. Lasca is such an adorable creature. But Lasca is the eternal bee in the flower; her seductive passion is short-lived and her desire for Byron soon dies to ebony cinders.

With that the tragedy of Byron's inadequate loves comes to a climax, with sorrow and gloom drenching the way.

* * *

The reaction to "Nigger Heaven" will be varied and tremendous. Colored people, who for the most part object to its title, will outlaw the lush lingo and the decadent cabaret passages on the ground that a white man wrote them and that "they do not show the race at its best." On the other hand, the majority of white people will prefer the Creeper's slinking cruises on the Avenue to the glowing glimpses of splendor among the dusky Harlem smart set.

In the last analysis, however, "Nigger Heaven" will be pointed to as a frontier work of an enduring order. As literature with a strong social bias it prepares the way for examination of the fruits of a cultural flowering among the Negroes which is now about to emerge.

And no colored man, adept as he might be at self-observation and non-identification, could have written it.

Giants in Undress

THE NINTH THERMIDOR. By M. A. ALDANOV. Translated from the Russian by A. E. CHAMOT. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1926.

Reviewed by LAWRENCE S. MORRIS

"THE NINTH THERMIDOR" is the first volume of a trilogy dealing with the French Revolution and the period immediately after it. The concluding section, entitled "Saint Helena," which is in reality an epilogue, has already been published in English. The second and central volume, which Mr. Aldanov tells us will be "the real picture of the revolutionary epoch" has not yet appeared, and the author begs us not to judge "The Ninth Thermidor" until we have read this second part, as many of the "chapters, episodes, and characters" in the first book will seem "unnecessary and useless" until we know the plan of the whole. While making reservations on this subject of the plan, it is still possible to form from "The Ninth Thermidor" an estimate of the spirit and method of the trilogy.

Mr. Aldanov has experienced one revolution personally. He was in Russia during the world war and the Russian revolution. In 1919 he left because of lack of sympathy with the Bolshevik régime, and returned to France where he had lived as a student. He does not, however, write of revolution as a counter-revolutionary—nor as a revolutionary. Perhaps it was this disinterestedness which made him uncomfortable in Russia. Reformers with programs to impose have never had much patience with the sceptic intelligence of artists and philosophers. Mr. Aldanov finds the contradictions of men more important than their doctrines. He broods over the profound discrepancy between their avowed principles and the unavowed needs out of which they act. In this first volume of his work he is absorbed by the problem of a reign of terror conducted in the name of liberty. "The Ninth Thermidor" culminates with the overthrow of Robespierre and the end of the Terror. "The unhappy enslaved country," says Mr. Aldanov, France, "was saved from fanatics by scoundrels." In short, he develops Anatole France's theme—though with less insight than the author of "Les Dieux Ont Soif"—that the passion, stupidities, and ambitions of the actors determined the crises of those heroic days as inevitably as they ensnare the most obscure and least conscious of our lives.

> It is easy to justify and more easy still to incriminate whomsoever you choose (he makes Talleyrand say). "Nobody is right. All are to blame. And it really would be better if the historians did not try to find a meaning—it is immaterial if it is positive or negative—in the terrible facts of the French Revolution. No sort of lesson can be drawn from the alternations of the elemental objectless acts generated by unbridled [illegible]

This spirit in which Mr. Aldanov approaches the "terrible facts" is important, since his book is essentially a series of historical portraits rather than a novel. By its fictional disguise and its panoramic scope it invites comparison with "War and Peace." The comparison also reveals the difference. Tolstoy realized, even more profoundly than Mr. Aldanov, the puppetry of those who appeared to be directing great events. He, too, wished to reëstimate the characters of those sensational puppets from a historical point of view. But Tolstoy's work, despite its vast digressions, remains a single breathing novel. His historical and non-historical personages mingle, with the exception of Napoleon, with equal validity, and in a glowing passionate sense of life. They are people modelled in the round. Mr. Aldanov takes a figurehead for his nominal hero: a colorless young Russian adventurer named Staal, who appears at the court of Catherine the Great. This gives the author a chance to forget Staal for a few chapters, and sketch the life and character of Catherine. Staal is then remembered and sent to London, stopping on the way in Königsberg where he meets Immanuel Kant in a public garden. The philosopher has grown garrulous in his decline, and delivers a monologue which occupies one chapter. In London Staal is invited to a gathering at which Burke, Pitt, and Talleyrand are all present, and all talk for posterity. From London he goes to Paris, where he is completely forgotten—except for a perfunctory *liaison* which the author allows him. After all, isn't he in Paris?—for the exciting subject of Robespierre and his fate. Whereas Tolstoy chose the novel by genius, Mr. Aldanov writes fiction by an unfortunate accident. His essential *flair* is for dramatic historical portraits. His people are not in the round. Mr. Aldanov has dramatized, in strong colors but with a somewhat heavy hand, a few of the cross-currents of personal conflict and intrigue, to which the older historians were blinded by the spectacle of events.

Between Decks

SAM NOBLE, ABLE SEAMAN. 'TWEEN DECKS IN THE 'SEVENTIES. An Autobiography. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1926. $3.

Reviewed by DAVID W. BONE

Author of "The Brassbounder"

THE "Silent Service," as the British Navy has, not without reason, been named, was never more dourly reticent as to its intimate life than in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Crimean War was the last advertisement—if Reviews at Spithead and an occasional Royal Visit remained unconsidered. During the Crimean period of hostilities, terse despatches from the theatre of operations were amplified by the writings of newly-fledged war correspondents. The land operations of seamen from the Fleet were reported in some detail. I can recall "hairy-chested" as being an adjective very generally in use. The *Illustrated London News* published pictures of the Samsons, of the "Agamemnon Babbies" hauling ships' ordnance to the seat of war and of the "Tiger's Cubs" loading round shot (curiously like stuffed puddings) into the maw of very substantial cannon.

As though in disquiet at such notice, personal records of naval doings and of service abroad became singularly rare when the blessings of peace were restored. Autobiographies of retired naval officers, interesting as they were, gave no clear view of seafaring. They would be titled in the manner of "With Rod and Gun on the China Station" or "Sport in the Persian Gulf." Shipkeeping would be but incidental to the toll and record of a Nimrod; sailor yarns would perhaps be interspersed to salt the narrative. The naval Victorians—as far as this writer is aware—had little to say of the great transition from sail to steam. However well documented in the archives at Whitehall, and available to the naval historian, such records are not generally known.

This is markedly in contrast with the diary of the Merchants' Service of the time. The intimate records of such stirring days at sea are numerous and complete. Seamen writers, in candor unrestrained and generally with no small degree of artistry, have left little to conjecture in detailing the rounds of sea life in the stately clippers, in coasting brig and schooner, in the early steamship, in home waters and abroad. Dana and Fenimore Cooper, Chapman, ("All About Ships—the Life and Duties of a Sailor from a Cabin Boy to a Captain." 1868) Melville—

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life—Runciman, (his "Shellback's Progress" and "Windjammers" have not been sufficiently known and admired), Conrad, Barry, Bullen, Noble, and published in later years but covering the close of the great days of sail—Lubbock, Wallace, Clements. Nor is there dearth of editors to document the period. McGee's "Atlantic Ferry," Lubbock's records, Captain Clark's "Clipper Ship Era," Keble Chatterton's expositions, and the many publications of the Massachusetts Society, cover the subject very completely.

A long preface! But it explains with what measure of joy I fell upon Sam Noble, able seaman. At last (or so I promised myself) I would learn something of how sail was trimmed in Her Majesty's Navy before canvas was finally unbent and the yards sent down, of how the old hands—who would not all be paid out when Sam served in the *Swallow*—viewed the pressure of steam and with what emotions they listened to the new note on shipboard, the roundel of the screws. I remembered seeing his ship, her glory departed, swinging the tides at Eastham as a powder hulk. I recalled the weird story of Old Park, foreman rigger among the longshoremen at Birkenhead, who had served in her. Of how, after chasing and coming up with a *dhow* in the Persian Gulf, they found her without stone (anchor) or cable, and could only surmise that the *nakodar*, finding himself overhauled, had tied his few slaves to the tackle, and let go in open sea. . . . I had great expectations, for it was clear that the author was an authenticated bluejacket of the old days.

Alas! Like master, like man! The same subtle restraint that characterizes the officer's reminiscences clouds the lowerdeckman's writing. Mr. Noble has put out a chronicle of but small beer. And the pity of it is that he could doubtless have given us a noble draught, had he tried. Time and again, interest is aroused in expectation of a famous happening, but appetite is unappeased by the recital of larks and horse-play between decks or of the hearty laughter evoked by the spectacle of the first cook's soiled jacket. Almost, one could imagine that the ship's corporal was ever at Sam's elbow as he wrote, ready to swing his rattan at the profane hand that would dare surrender the closely guarded records of a cruise abroad.

* * *

Sam is indeed the incurable optimist, a veritable Mark Tapley, and we may gather from his pages that H. M. S. *Swallow* was a "happy" ship. Keenly interested, as he was, in his shipmates, it is but natural that the men should stand out in his reminiscences rather than the incidents of the voyage. In sharp contrast with such a paragraph as—

> . . . at one of these desolate outlandish places we were for ever touching at in our "shopping expeditions" as we called them; where we dropped anchor, sent a boat ashore, did something, and then up anchor and away again.

is his study of Mr. Freedie—"Pipes"—the boatswain.

> He was a big man, muscular and hairy, with a hand like a deck bucket and a voice like the Archangel Gabriel. Nobody could say they didn't hear him. If he wanted anything and shouted for you, and he were on the fo'c'sle and you in the hold, you heard him all right. . . .

Mr. Freedie is reproved by the officer of the day for using over-strong language in the conduct of operations on deck, and has perforce to put a curb upon his flow of spirit.

> "Now then, you Saltash fishwives," he roared, nearly choking with the restraint he had put upon himself. "D'ye hear that, you d-d-darlings—you know. You d-d-dodderin' dockyard mateys. . . . You b-b-beauties—ye know what I mean."

Writing in 1925 of the events of 1875, Mr. Noble is apparently unable to recapture the fine flush of his sailing days, and his Chapter XVIII, "The Slave Chase," leaves this seaman-writer quite bewildered as to the manœuvres and intent of the whole business. However bright the moonlight, it is hardly to be believed that—

> We could still make out objects on the brig, and distinctly saw her skipper jump on the taffrail, his figure twinkling under the glowing moon, like a mannikin, smack his breech energetically and twiddle his fingers at us in contempt, twisting himself side-on to let us see him do it.

Be it remarked that a shot from the seven-inch gun has already been sent after her and the "chase" is hotly in progress.

But, throughout the book, there are gleanings for the understanding reader. The field of survey is not wholly overrun by the tares of prank and *prandium*. The author's great love for his ship inspires his best writing and even after long shore-dwelling he recalls her—

> . . . Dressed in gleaming white canvas, her graceful body rising and falling with the heave and swell, the waves dancing about her, and the long wake broadening out astern.

Growth

THE PRELUDE, OR GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND. By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Edited from the manuscripts, with introduction, textual and critical notes by ERNEST DE SELINCOURT. New York: Oxford University Press. 1926. $8.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE MCLEAN HARPER
Princeton University

TO serious students of poetry and to many lovers of poetry the publication of this volume is the most important literary event of the year. Much English poetry of high excellence has been written since Wordsworth died, and even within the last decade Mr. A. E. Housman has added to the glorious company of our classics; but there is an upper realm, a region of the blest where the few supremely great masterpieces rarely have to make room for newcomers, and in this atmosphere "The Prelude" abides. Judicious readers consider it the best long poem in our language, barring "Paradise Lost." Although not originally intended for publication, but as a personal outpouring to Coleridge, it is the very gospel of art to those who are intellectually interested in poetry or any other form of imaginative creation, because it lays bare the character and history not only of a particular poet, but of *the poet* in general. It is one of the world's great "confessions," and is less marred by affectation than most of them. Its supreme quality is sincerity. Furthermore, it enjoys the secondary advantage of being the only full and understanding comment on the French Revolution made by a man of extraordinary imaginative genius and also of uncommon political sagacity who had witnessed the events which he described.

After Wordsworth's death, in 1850, his widow and his nephew sent to the press an almost letter-perfect manuscript of a poem upon which he had been at work intermittently between 1795 and 1839, the bulk of it having been composed between 1799 and 1806. It had no name, having been known in the family as "the poem to Coleridge" and "the poem on his own life." Mrs. Wordsworth gave it the rather unattractive though sufficiently explanatory title which it bears. Innocent readers at once assumed that it was all of a piece and that it correctly represented the poet's convictions as they were in his prime, that is to say between 1797 and 1807. Careful students of his life, however, have perceived that this could not be the case, because in many vital respects his life was not integral, his latter self being remarkably at variance with what he was before middle age. They felt sure that by revising his poem in later years Wordsworth must have altered its original significance. The young man was a radical in several full and flagrant senses of the word. He was a pacifist, a revolutionary, a democrat, an unbeliever in orthodox Christianity. The poem as published in 1850 presents an incongruous mixture of his early convictions with the conservative views of his old age. The doubters are now proved to have been correct.

* * *

Until recently it was supposed that only one manuscript of "The Prelude" existed, the fair copy, of late date, which embodied the author's corrections and which served for printing the edition of 1850. But about five years ago there came into the possession of Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, the poet's grandson, a huge mass of manuscripts containing the poem in various stages of development, the number of individual lines being about half again as many as those of the printed poem. He placed these papers in the experienced hands of Professor de Selincourt, who, after several years of what must have been extremely hard work, has produced the present variorum edition. The originals are in many handwritings, at least five members of the household having been engaged in copying, and there are many passages and corrections in the poet's own almost indecipherable scrawl, besides notes by Coleridge. Some of the writing is on loose leaves, some in bound notebooks. Having seen this sibylline mass, I can bear witness to the skill and patience of the editor. He has rescued from the mind of the river of Time the *disjecta membra* of a great statue.

He has done even more: he has washed these limbs and put them together by a process of accurate restoration. On the right hand pages of his book he prints the version of 1850, on the left hand pages the earliest of the newly discovered complete versions, dating from 1805-1806, and at the bottom the minor variants. Altogether he has had to deal with thirteen distinct manuscripts, of which five are long and contain the whole poem as it was at different periods. The other eight, some of which are of even earlier origin and possess therefore immense interest, are more fragmentary, being drafts of passages intended to be incorporated in the poem. The oldest notebook appears to date from 1798 and contains portions of other poems and some lines of Dorothy Wordsworth's precious Alfoxden Journal. Many lines of great beauty, originally a part of "Michael" and never before printed, now see the light. Thus we have at last material for studying the history of "The Prelude" even more complete than that furnished for "Hamlet" by the folio and several quarto editions or for Milton's early poems by the treasures of Trinity College.

* * *

The text is followed by notes, in which Professor de Selincourt does not confine himself to textual criticism, but also explains many allusions which would be obscure to anyone less familiar than he is with the places and manner in which the poet lived. It is preceded by a lucid Introduction, describing the manuscripts, giving a chronology of the composition of the poem, and comparing the text of 1805-1806 with that of 1850 with reference to the changes introduced in the latter. In regard to these he says that many of them are "criticisms directed by a man of seventy winters against his own past." As an example of Wordsworth's political change, he calls attention to the fact that the celebrated but strangely inconsistent eulogy of Burke as a defender of political institutions is absent from the early versions. But most to be regretted, as the editor says, are those alterations in the text by which the poet obscured the statement of that religious faith which was his at the period when he did his greatest work. This faith was far removed from orthodox Christianity. It was not even theistic. By little changes here and there, in the revised "Prelude," the real religion of Wordsworth between 1797 and 1805 was misrepresented, and for it was substituted something less original, less independent, and altogether out of perspective with what he was and believed in the day of his creative strength.

The question arises: what in future will be the authentic text of "The Prelude?" Are all previous editions to be regarded as too incorrect for further use? If so, how shall an ideal text be constructed? This is a subject which will give editors and publishers much to think about. Plainly there will be attempts to construct an ideal text, and plainly also editors will do well to follow two suggestions of Professor de Selincourt: they will "retain from the earliest version such familiar details as have any autobiographical significance," and they will "reject all modifications of the poet's original thought and attitude to his theme."

The book contains six facsimiles of manuscript pages and one of the best portraits of Wordsworth, from the pencil drawing by Henry Eldridge in 1805, now in the possession of Mrs. Rasousley at Grasmere. It is a delight to see this pleasing and characteristic likeness of the poet, who was so horribly misrepresented by the sentimental school of artists in his later years, his most unattractive pictures being for some unaccountable reason still generally used to illustrate editions of his works.

The chief political editor of the *Figaro*, M. Lucien Romier, who gave us an interesting book in 1924 entitled "Explication de Notre Temps," has written his first novel, "L'Homme Blessé" (Grasset), which has been looked for with some curiosity. Again interpreting our times, M. Romier has taken for his hero a young man who had been injured in the war, who finds himself struggling with a newly-organized world, and whose worst wound lies in his consciousness that he has been robbed of his real youth. The action moves rapidly and smoothly, and a peculiar love story holds the interest. For a first novel it is rather a good one, but is the kind that does not "bite in."

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As It Should Be Written

HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By GEORGE MACAULAY TREVELYAN. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1926. $4.25.

Reviewed by WALTER S. HAYWARD
Harvard University

THIS latest history of England had its origin in a series of Lowell Lectures delivered by the author in Boston during the spring of 1924, and is dedicated, with courteous gesture, to the president of Harvard University. George Macaulay Trevelyan needs little introduction to the American public. He is known not only as the son of George Otto Trevelyan, who wrote one of the most readable histories of the American Revolution, and as the grandnephew of the great Macaulay, but also as the author of three volumes on Garibaldi and several books on various aspects of English history. Needless to say, he carries on the Whig tradition, which brings him to regard the American Revolution not as a war between two nations, but as a civil war to determine whether "England should be ruled by the King acting through Parliament, or by Parliament acting through the King."

The first third of the book is devoted to pre-Tudor times, because of their basic character in laying the foundations for the great and all-important development of England during the last 400 years. Trevelyan treads softly amid the maze of theory and opinion which seeks to bring order and light into the early history of England. As he himself remarks, "Idealization and sweeping censure are equally dangerous with regard to any period—whether Past or Present." There is little opportunity for saying of him, as Lord Melbourne is said to have remarked of his grand-uncle, "I wish I were as cocksure of any one thing as Macaulay is of everything."

The equipment for the student is not neglected. Thus there is a list of books for further reading at the end of each chapter, and there are maps—very good ones, too—used for illustrative purposes. Dates are employed liberally, but the majority of them are placed in the margin, where they offer no bar to literary expression.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

It is the art of generalization which makes history memorable, while it is the narrative quality which makes it interesting. Trevelyan has that rare ability which enables him to sum up the character of an individual, an epoch, or an event, in a few trenchant words or phrases. Thus of the Tudor period he writes, "English King-worship was the secret of a family and the spirit of an age;" of Elizabeth, "She had learnt every lesson that adversity had to teach, and she would leave it to her rival to lose the world for love;" of Cromwell, "If the mace was a bauble and the crown to boot, what counted but the sword?" and of the first Stuart, "Not only did England remain *terra incognita* to James, but he never became aware of his ignorance."

The whole book is filled with comments which illuminate, such as "Paine's Republicanism stuck like a burr to everything liberal," "Fox was made to be loved by his friends," or "Nature had early decided that the inhabitants of Britain must be insular." He has also the gift of expressing himself diplomatically to American ears. Thus he writes that "It was well that America was made. It was tragic that the making could only be effected by a war with Britain."

In the preface it is stated that a book which attempts to cover the whole history of England in 700 pages is apt to be either a text book or an essay. Trevelyan has succeeded in writing neither. By a judicious mingling of the chronological, political, economic, sociological, military, and personal, there is produced a dramatic and moving history of the evolution of a country and its institutions, illumined by great knowledge, enriched with apt quotation, and developed with a literary skill which sets it apart from the majority of its competitors.

The Unicorn Publishing Company is now preparing an anthology of unpublished American poetry. Among the many aims of this Anthology is to bring to public attention hitherto unknown poets. All poets are invited to contribute manuscripts for consideration. Manuscripts should be sent to the Anthology Editor, Unicorn Publishing Company, 220 West 42nd street, New York City.

The Bowling Green

Horace, Book Five

WITH gay instinct for the painful and irrelevant, the editorial writers mostly agreed to pick upon the least important poem in Rudyard Kipling's new book, and wrote ponderous grievance about it. As a matter of fact not one but three of the poems are pretty straightly barbed against America; but the other two are too subtly led to be readily observable. The one on Prohibition would have been the one to quote, for an editor with a nostril for News.

But I did have to blink my eyes a little, finding in our gravest journals such remarks as this: "The numerous poems which adorn 'Debits and Credits' do not compel one to much comment . . . Frankness compels one to state that the original pieces composed for the present volume do not measure up." What, do four new "translations" from the Fifth Book of Horace's Odes compel no comment? Or are we to suppose that our reviewers don't know the joke about Horace's Fifth Book? I was brooding a bit morosely on this matter when, just in time to gruntle my heart somewhat, I met F. P. A. coming out of the subway. It was a jocund coincidence, for he had under his arm the rare little "Carminum Liber Quintus" (a Rudyard Kipling et Carolo Graves Anglice Redditus) which is also one of my treasures. We stood prating together in City Hall Park, two happy casuals, our erring bosoms full of homage to the man who, after nineteen centuries, recaptures the very voice.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

The huge paradox of Kipling is never more apparent than when you read the reviews of a new book of his. This extraordinary writer, whom we are accustomed to see billed as speaking to the world's hugest fiction audience, is really the subtlest of highbrows. His finest things would bore the slackwit reader just as Shakespeare does. He would have been the greatest professor of English Literature that our tongue has ever known, because he has the violent and tragic sense of literature as the very perspiration on the brow of life. He writes a story ostensibly about big howitzers, and it is really a lover's tribute to Jane Austen. He writes a story apparently about wireless, and it means nothing save to a student of Keats. In this new volume the two Stalkies and the Jane Austen story coruscate with literary allusion and esoteric jape. "The Propagation of Knowledge" might have been written specially to wring the withers of the Modern Language Association. His fragment on "How Shakespeare Came To Write the 'Tempest,'" written in 1898 as a letter to the London *Spectator*, like all his marvellous side-glances into Elizabethan doings (have a look at his old poem "The Craftsman") shows his understanding of how and where poetry is born. Only learned students, packed with curious and private lore, could properly trace the wild chameleon variation of his mind. How, with a hundred tints and shadings he has been able to take at will the color of any man from Horace to Mulvaney—and yet, in the core of the crystal, we see ever the identity of the egregious Beetle. When was there a more vast, wanton, irrepressible, furious, grotesque, and impossible fecundity? It is a silly thing to say—yet how much of literature consists in saying the silliest things possible—there is perhaps more of the specific and technical Shakespeare-gift in our well-loved Beetle than in any other man these times have seen. At his worst, God knows, he is as bad as Shakespeare ever was. At his best, he has looked upon pure flame. Those who know the color of naked fire will recognize it when they see

> Rubies of every heat, where through we scan
> The fiercer and more fiery heart of man.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

It was odd that "The United Idolaters," perhaps the charmingest tribute of love ever paid to an American sanctity—Uncle Remus—hasn't been mentioned in the editorials. But that is not what editorials are for. They must leap upon the verses in which a man with tragedy in his heart ventures to say, and with mannerly disguise, some words that seem to him bitterly true. There are others in which the soul is opened so plainly that one keeps decent silence. And here and there, if you are on the air for these things, is that specific wave-length of Kipling genius that is not always relished or understood but is uniquely itself. If anyone ever tells you it is a genius available for the million, I think you will be safe to contradict. I haven't yet read all the stories, but I didn't let the sun go down on any unread poems. With no right or permission whatever I'm going to quote from the addenda to Horace—

TO THE COMPANIONS

HORACE, Ode 17, Bk. V.

How comes it that, at even-tide,
When level beams should show most truth,
Man, failing, takes unfailing pride
In memories of his frolic youth?

Venus and Liber fill their hour;
The games engage, the law-courts prove;
Till hardened life breeds love of power
Or Avarice, Age's final love.

Yet at the end, these comfort not—
Nor any triumph Fate decrees—
Compared with glorious, unforgotten innocent enormities

Of frontless days before the beard,
When, instant on the casual jest,
The God Himself of Mirth appeared
And snatched us to His heaving breast.

And we—not caring who He was
But certain He would come again—
Accepted all He brought to pass
As Gods accept the lives of men . . .

Then He withdrew from sight and speech,
Nor left a shrine. How comes it now
While Charon's keel grates on the beach,
He calls so clear: "Rememberest thou?"

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

I've been interested to see that the *Literary Review* is conducting a symposium on whether authors care what the critics say about their work, and perhaps that topic is akin to the present matter. If any writer says he is not interested in the critics' comments he is probably either a liar or a genius. But as to reviews having any real effect, turning any of his inward valves, it seems to me inconceivable.

Long before a book reaches the reviewers, its author has made up his own mind about it. He knows bitterly well how nearly it represents his intentions. Praise from those he respects probably shames him and makes him eager to do better. Reproach usually stiffens his neck. But in his core and gizzard he is totally unmoved. I am told that some writers actually subscribe to clipping bureaus so as not to miss any of their "notices." The idea is incredible.

For printers' ink, chucked about at random, is so murderous to the finer delicacies that one is soon cured of any appetite for mere publicity. And if you ever had a notion to deal, a bit savagely, with some of the central realities and joys and horrors, you would probably be told that you are pleasantly whimsical. Also there will always be those who resent any man saying what he exactly thinks. To such resentment there can be no answer. Horace suggested in the Fifth Book—since he didn't write it—that silence is best.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

"That well-known politician, Mr. J. G. Swift McNeill, who died the other day" (says *John O'London's Weekly*), "wrote a hand that was nearly illegible. But he was not in the same class of illegibility with certained distinguished authors. We all know how Sydney Smith described his writing, and how Balzac's proofs were so scored about with brackets, circles, and phrases, mixed and netted in such a way that they looked like puzzles of a new and ingenious order. Victor Hugo was another offender, and the late Andrew Lang dealt in a fist which looked like a cross between cuneiform and a schoolboy's script. Thomas Carlyle was one of the worst, and there is a pleasant little story which tells of a compositor who had been recommended to Carlyle's London publishers by the *Edinburgh Review*. His first job in London was to deal with some of Carlyle's copy, whereupon he cried out in despair: 'Have you got that man here? I came from Scotland to get away from him!'"

The recent death of Rudolf Christoph Eucken, for many years professor of philosophy in the University of Jena, removes from the ranks of German scholarship one of its outstanding figures. Professor Eucken, who won the Nobel prize for literature in 1908, and who in 1912 was a Harvard exchange professor, ceased active teaching in 1920, and thereafter devoted himself entirely to scientific writing.

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Books of Special Interest

Ramblings Abroad

NORTHERN LIGHTS AND SOUTHERN SHADE. By DOUGLAS GOLDRING. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1926. $5.

CONCERNING CORSICA. By RÉNÉ JUTA. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1926.

A STUDENT IN SICILY. By E. NEVILL JACKSON. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 1926.

A WAYFARER IN EGYPT. By ANNIE A. QUIBELL. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1926. $3.

A WAYFARER IN UNFAMILIAR JAPAN. By WALTER WESTON. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1926. $3.

SIGNPOSTS OF ADVENTURE. By JAMES WILLARD SCHULTZ. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1926. $2.50.

BOSTON IN SEVEN DAYS. By C. A. ATHEARN. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. 1926. $1.50.

Reviewed by DALE WARREN

WHILE most of my friends seem to be summering at Dinard and St. Jean de Luz, I have been taking a little trip myself, starting in Scandanavia and dropping down through France to Corsica and Sicily, wandering about Egypt and unfamiliar Japan and returning to Boston by way of Glacier National Park.

With Douglas Goldring as a travelling companion, one absorbs more than the array of facts presented in the more conventional guide book. "Northern Lights and Southern Shade" is a series of travel impressions etched somewhat in the manner of the author's earlier "Gone Abroad." In Sweden, Mr. Goldring finds his high lights; in Brittany, the warmer tones which he reproduces no less deftly. This is an extremely personal volume and purports in no way to be an authoritative treatise on the places visited. It constitutes a record of personal experiences and impressions which, according to Mr. Goldring, "presupposes errors, limitations, misunderstandings, and every kind of fallibility." That is its charm. The reader is invited to form his own opinions and to take exception, if he will, to the facts given and the inferences drawn by the author, so that this is a real voyage of discovery and not a mere geographic exercise.

Gothenburg, Bohuslan, and Stockholm are the regions about which Mr. Goldring takes his Scandinavian holiday, and there is little that his trained eye does not see, and less upon which his active mind does not reflect in quasi-philosophical mood. Mr. Goldring shows himself to be more interested in people than in places, particularly in the French section where the *pecheurs* engage his attention ahead of the picturesque cyrags that dominate the Breton coast. These "leaves from a traveler's notebook" make capital reading, and Mr. Goldring is over-zealous in his apology for them.

Corsica with its beds of asphodel and its seas as blue as the "blood of gentians," Corsica the home of Colomba and the cradle of Napoleon, Corsica the place where discouraged bandits "practically hire themselves out to dinner parties"—this is the spot which lured Réné Juta from the sophisticated pleasures of the Côte d'Azur. Likewise does she lure the reader to the enchanted island that can be reached in two hours by hydroplane from the Riviera if one is in a hurry. Her book is comparable to Mr. Goldring's only by reason of its informality of style; it is broader in scope as it aims to give a complete picture. Corsica is described minutely, with space given to its natural beauties, its tradition, its history, its politics, its absurdities, yet this is delicately woven into a tale of personal adventure, and a section labelled "Notes" takes care of odd details that, however helpful to other travelers, are out of place in the body of so idyllic an interlude. Jan Juta's paintings, reproduced in full color, give the reader the feeling that the author has in no way exaggerated her description of the wild charm of this "scented isle."

As its title implies, the Sicilian volume is one of specialized interest, and Mrs. Jackson succeeds admirably in what she sets out to do, namely, "to note the scenery, the buildings with their great historical perspective, and the crafts wrought by almost every nation of the civilized world who each in turn have conquered or colonized." She further explains: "This is not a guide book. I have made no attempt to describe the seventy-eight churches and oratories, the fourteen gates and forty-four palaces of Palermo, nor the thirty temples of Sicily." The result is the well-filled sketch book of a student who notes unusual architectural designs, original workmanship in pottery and metal, and distinctive patterns in old lace and jewelry. The volume, which is lavishly illustrated, has a decided reference value, and will prove of interest to the antiquarian as well as to the traveler.

The Egyptian and Japanese volumes serve to introduce the new "Wayfarer Series," in which several succeeding volumes are promised. Here are no random impressions, but carefully planned, seriously written, authoritative studies which abound in practical data and are surprisingly complete. Mrs. Quibell lives in Egypt and Mr. Weston in Japan; their books have, therefore, been built over a long period of time, and opportunity has not been lacking to delve into the field of first-hand investigation. Mrs. Quibell, who covers Egypt as a whole, is primarily concerned with the archæological, while Mr. Weston pays particular attention to the regions slightly off the beaten track and goes into the less familiar details of Japanese social life.

In "Signposts of Adventure," James Willard Schultz lists and discusses the topographical features of Glacier National Park, giving the Blackfeet and Kutenai Indian place names associated with this region. Mr. Schultz brings to this study a variety of adventure tales and Indian legends, and shows himself once more to be a well-informed and sympathetic chronicler of Indian life and character. The volume, aside from this feature, has little general interest.

Making a jump across the continent we reach Boston and put ourselves in the hands of C. R. Athearn for a seven days' tour. In reality, we cover Boston in three days, finding on closer investigation that Cambridge, Lexington and Concord, Salem and Plymouth consume the other four. Physically speaking, this is the most unattractive volume we have perused in many a day, but once lost in the thread of the author's narrative it is an easy matter to forget it. Mr. Athearn is to be congratulated on his original conception of what might almost have been "another guide book." He has cast his material in narrative form, introducing three characters who set out to make a week's tour of Boston and vicinity and visit in turn the historic scenes, landmarks, galleries, museums, restaurants, and theatres, getting lost invariably in a maze of crooked, narrow streets. The book is happily without the facetious tone that might be expected, and even the most callous is gracefully led to believe that sightseeing is, after all, an art.

A London Comedy

LAVENDER LADIES. A Comedy in Three Acts. By DAISY FISHER. Brentano. 1926. $1.50.

THIS latest comedy from London is disappointing. The writing is at times vivacious, and there are occasional bits of humorous description, but the thinking is sleazy and sentimental. As a play it has serious faults of construction. The dialogue is too "talky," the scenes too loose in tension, with the possible exception of a portion of the last act. Fitted together with description it might make a novel, but not a consequential novel at that. The story has no grip on reality. There are, of course, in the world dainty, precise old maids such as Miss Anne and Miss Rose, the "Lavender Ladies," "fragrantly scented and laid away," who need to be shaken out of their narrow conventionalism. There are, doubtless, reprehensible authors, such as Hayward Clear, who, unable to sell the sincere work of their youth, spread forth radical doctrines they do not believe, and would not live out, simply in order to make money. And there are thoughtless young girls, as April Clear, who are influenced to the worse by these doctrines. But the real people that such would be in the world we do not find in Miss Fisher's play, but only their invented semblances.

We believe what the author seeks to say that tolerance is a virtue, and insincerity a vice. We welcome a warning against unthinking adherence to old institutions simply because they are old, and equally against adoption of new doctrines simply because they are new. But we are not convinced by the idioms of action and character which Miss Fisher chooses to state her protestations. Her mood of conception is too light for her theme. True comedy is a sharp vehicle for a criticism of life. Here is not true comedy, but comedy-drama of an inferior order.

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Books of Special Interest

An Old-Time Sailor

SAMUEL KELLY, AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SEAMAN. Edited by CROSBY GARSTIN. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1926.

Reviewed by MEADE MINNIGERODE

THIS is, as he himself describes it, "a short account of the life of Samuel Kelly, whose days have been few, and evil."

Born in 1764, Kelly left school at the age of fourteen. "I was then sent to sea, and for the first four years sailed in the Falmouth packets; then I sailed about three years in the Transport Service. . . . The remainder of my sea-life I spent in the service of a merchant from the port of Liverpool, the first three years I was chief mate and the latter years I was shipmaster." When he returned, at the age of thirty-one, he could say that "I had now been seventeen years regularly at sea, exclusive of my first voyage to South Carolina . . . previous to the American War; and, on a rough calculation, I imagine I have sailed more than one hundred thousand miles on the Atlantic Ocean." He had never been stranded or wrecked, he had never had more than a topmast carried away, and the underwriters had never lost a sixpence by him.

The manuscript of the journal was discovered after a hundred years in a bureau drawer, at St. Ives, in Cornwall, and given to Mr. Garstin by Mr. Bridger, the bookseller of Penzance, who considered it "intensely interesting—if you cut the psalm-singing." Mr. Garstin found it to be a work which "ran to approximately three hundred thousand words, . . . and about two hundred thousand commas. . . . Asterisks were also a passion with Kelly. . . . Then there was the 'psalm-singing,'" which was a "common disease among retired mariners of that day." Mr. Garstin removed the psalms and most of the commas, and there remains the plain, straightforward, unaffected, personal chronicle of a British merchant sailor in the troublous, war-smitten, privateer-ridden days of the late eighteenth century.

It is a worthy addition to the growing shelf of books concerning the merchant marine; especially valuable in that it sets forth the experiences of a perfectly obscure, unextraordinary, matter-of-fact sailor and shipmaster; one among hundreds of those excellent mariners, those "humble merchant masters," according to Mr. Garstin, "who kept trade alive through those critical years." It is not that his recollections are so startling, or so important, or even especially interesting, frequently, of themselves. Just talk of ships, and mates, and cargoes; of ports in America, in the West Indies, in Spain; of perils of the sea and the idiosyncracies of ordinary men; of discomforts and misfortunes, and little daily adventures. But out of it all there comes a picture of the time, of the maritime life of the day, of dangers and hazards encountered, of a sailor's honest conflicts with the sea. And these are often startling, at all times important, and always vastly interesting.

And not without their humor. "Was it not for a superintending Providence," Kelly observes, "how few seamen would be spared to old age, considering the perils they go through." That was after the rat had chewed through the ship's side at the water line. And the verdigris in the pease copper, "which the cook's mate had neglected to clean, as usual." And the passenger who had "spent his precious hours with profligate companions in midnight scenes of riot and dissipation"—the gentleman who tried to break into a nunnery disguised as a lady.

And not without their very high courage and dignity. Read the account of the winter passage from Liverpool to New York, "119 days, or seventeen weeks, the marine grass growing on our sides as high as the gunwale. . . . During the passage we were laying to for forty-eight days. We melted ice to supply our drinks. . . . Many a long, dark, winter's night I passed in the cabin . . . in gross darkness, soothed to sleep by whistling winds and roaring seas. The long dark hours were spent in deep solemnity. . . ."

These matters are worthy to be remembered. An old-time sailor. . . .

Les Presses Universitaires de France has recently issued the fourth volume in the monumental diplomatic history of Greece in which MM. Driault and Lhéritier are collaborating. The present volume, by M. Lhéritier, carries the chronicle from 1878 to 1908, laying its chief stress on Greece and the Balance of Power in the Balkans, and the Cretan Insurrection with the international complications ensuing from it.

Revolution

PIONEERS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION By M. ROUSTAN. Translated by FREDERIC WHYTE. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1926. $4.

PARIS IN THE REVOLUTION. By G. LENOTRE. Translated by H. Noel Williams. New York: Brentano's. 1926. $4.50.

THE simultaneous appearance of these two notable volumes on the French Revolution in their English dress must be welcome to all who are interested in the great subject of which they treat yet who are ignorant of the language in which that revolution was carried on. As to the first of these books the publishers observe that "No intellectual controversy of the last half century has been more interesting than the campaign to exalt the seventeenth century in France at the expense of its successor." But the observations of M. Roustan at the very outset of his study of his subject are more to the point. From the beginning he states his position in opposition to MM. Faguet, Rocquain, and their followers, whom Roustan accuses of having corrupted even the candidates for degrees in the universities. The French Revolution is, indeed, one of those subjects which has become history without ceasing to be politics. Yet with all its author's acumen, his lively style, his learning, it seems somehow to a mere outsider that it is either a little behind or a little ahead of the times to be defending the thesis that the philosophers had something to do with thought in the eighteenth century, and in particular with revolutionary thought. None the less it may be that there are some to whom such a thesis is both new and welcome.

Of far different character is the volume of M. Lenôtre. Of all creatures in the world of scholarship he is among the rarest, for he is an antiquarian who can write in a fashion which compels any one who takes up his books to read them. The fact that a recent reviewer notes that this volume is too minutely particular to interest any one not directly interested in Paris or the Revolution is one of the most amusing observations ever made by even that overworked craft. Any antiquarian whose books run to forty, fifty, and sixty editions is a phenomenon which deserves consideration. And if any one ever wrote a more amusing and entertaining volume on such a subject it has not been the good fortune of at least one reviewer to see it. To know what Marat would have had for supper that night if Charlotte Corday had not happened to kill him first, to learn that she had at least one proposal of marriage on her way to the deed which made her famous, to discover what became of the bath-tub in which he was killed—what an amazingly good time M. Lenôtre had when he found this out!

The book is full even to overflowing with the intimate personal details which have been the fruit of an insatiable curiosity, an infinite patience, a lively imagination, and a genius for discovery which makes the great historical detective, and a style which makes the great detective story writer. And above all, perhaps, it makes the figures of the Revolution alive. They are no longer in his pages the mere automatons which adorn too much history. They ate and drank and slept, made their living, married, had housemaids and household bills, paid rent, bought clothes, loved and hated and worked and played, like other folk who never got into history. They were exceedingly human beings. And there is no one who would not be interested in them. If one wants a book to read, let him read Lenôtre.

Of radically different character from M. Poincaré's recent book, and since its author is dead presumably his last volume, is the memoirs of Field Marshal Conrad. "Aus Meiner Dienstzeit, 1906-1918" (Vienna: Rikola) an ill-assembled and not at all digested compendium of notes and documents, constantly revealing the author's unpliable mind, conceit, and lack of penetration. For students of history—those, at least trained to separate the chaff from the wheat it contains much material of value, but for the lay reader it can have but small interest. As a reviewer in the London *Times Literary Supplement* remarks "Never has a man responsible for a war drawn up such an indictment against himself as Conrad in his memoirs; seldom has an unsuccessful general admitted so much as he has in the fourth and fifth volumes; but then never was any man more firmly convinced to the very end that no blame could possibly attach to his own person."

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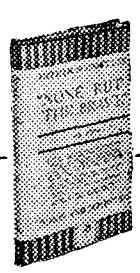

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Literature Abroad

By ERNEST BOYD

"IT is difficult for the reader of today, who sees Papini's 'Life of Christ' occupying the place of a best seller on American bookstalls, to realize that, a century ago, Italian prose was the pariah of Europe." I quote these lines from the preface to the Rev. Daniel J. Connor's superb translation of Manzoni's "Promessi Sposi" for two reasons. First, because his version of "The Betrothed" (Macmillan) is a fine service to literature and scholarship, so immeasurably superior to the standard translation in the Bohn Library that it ought to make this great Italian classic and greatest of Italian novels a classic in English. And second, because his statement has a direct bearing upon the present status of Italian fiction.

It was Manzoni who in 1827 restored Italian prose to world literature with "I Promessi Sposi" and, incidentally, laid the foundations of modern prose fiction in Italy. Within fifty years after that date the book had been translated seventeen times into German, nineteen times into French, ten times into English, three times into Spanish, and once into Greek, Swedish, Dutch, Russian, Hungarian, and Armenian. Yet, I have never heard an English-speaking person, unfamiliar with Italian, refer to it, and a couple of months ago, when the New York *Times* held an international symposium on the twelve immortals of literature, only one person mentioned Manzoni, to wit, Guglielmo Ferrero! Since Balzac and Dickens were, on that occasion, classified as immortals by a majority vote drawn from several countries, I am constrained to go on believing that Manzoni is essentially an Italian figure, just as Calderón is essentially Spanish, for he was mentioned only by his compatriot Blasco Ibáñez.

The bearing of these facts on contemporary Italian fiction is often overlooked by those who ask why one cannot recommend a first-rate Italian novel. People seem to forget that the novel is a latecomer in Italian literature, and by the time the unity of Italy was achieved, the old divisions, if they ceased to have any political significance, had a geographical existence which, coupled with the absence of a unifying tradition of the novel as a long-established form, inevitably made Italian fiction regional. Giovanni Verga, Luigi Capuana, and Alfredo Oriani, were Sicilians, Matilde Serao's novels are Neapolitan, Grazia Deledda writes of Sardinia, and Fogazarro's *piccolo mondo antico* was the Valsolda and Alpine environs of Lugano. Local life, provincial manners, and often the dialect of a particular region prevented these writers, who are the foremost names in contemporary Italian fiction, from producing a national novel of Italy. D'Annunzio alone, in his peculiar way, became the one successor, by a real irony of literary history, of the pure and gentle Manzoni. The projected edition of his works by the Italian Government, and the protests reported here a couple of weeks ago by Aldo Sorani, illustrate the anomaly of this situation.

Meanwhile Guglielmo Ferrero himself has turned novelist, and has clearly set out to provide Italy with a vast novel of metropolitan life that shall be national in scope. The general title is "La Terza Roma," in four volumes, of which the first, "Le Due Verità," has appeared, and the second, "La Rivolta del Figlio," is announced for this winter. Like Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" this book is founded upon the actual reports of a criminal suit which caused a sensation in Sicily some forty-five years ago. The author's brother-in-law is a professor of Criminal Law at the University of Turin, and is credited with having supplied the eminent historian with the necessary documents. But when one is an eminent historian, and one turns to writing fiction, the plot of a novel must be invested with more pomp and circumstance than is afforded by this mere statement of a simple fact.

Obvious and natural as his procedure will seem to any novelist familiar with the craft, Signor Ferrero has kindly explained himself to that distinguished French critic of European literature, M. Louis Gillet. He was struck, it appears, by the frequency in Roman and early Italian history of poison scandals. "If we are to believe Tacitus and Suetonius the family of the Caesars was simply a race of monsters engaged in getting rid of each other by means of poison. Germanicus, Claudius, Britannicus—poisoned: Tiberius, Agrippina, and Nero still stand out in human memory as the sinister figures of parricides. This tragic family seems to have been possessed by devils. Nevertheless, this contagion of crime, this generation of dark assassins, aroused Signor Ferrero's suspicions." He concluded, after reflection, that poisoning was exactly the sort of crime which lent itself to popular superstitions, that the setting was almost always similar, and that the crowd, "rarely accepting a misfortune as a natural accident," gets its chance of turning history into a species of sensational "thriller," with its victims, scapegoats, plotting, and villainy all complete.

In order to satisfy himself the author of "Le Due Vehità" studied several contemporary trials, and selected one to prove that all is not poison that glitters sensationally, and also, I suppose, to give his novel a plot. The story he tells is of the sudden death, after convulsions, of Albert Cavalieri. All Italy is excited over the affair. His wife Suzanne is suspected of having poisoned him and his mother specifically charges her with the crime. The expert toxicologist, Senator Guicciarelli, finds traces of poison in the intestines, a substance called picrotoxin, of which he is the discoverer. Then it is proved that the substance found is picrotin, an allied but harmless substance, to which the expert retorts that, after a day or two, picrotoxin loses its poisonous qualities and become picrotin—which merely shows how diabolically clever the poisoner was in selecting that particular poison. At this point, where the story begins, the case is about to expire, when suddenly the situation is changed by a new development, the acquittal of Suzanne is postponed, she is charged with murder and must stand trial before a grand jury. Thus the book ends on exactly the contrary note to that which was suggested at the beginning.

When I add that this is the nucleus of a four volume novel, of which the first volume must be at least 150,000 words in length, it will be evident that Guglielmo Ferrero has something else to relate than the vicissitudes of poison trials. As a matter of fact, the Cavalieri case serves as the pivot around which takes place the struggle of the forces which were, at the time, taking possession of the new Rome as we know it today. On the one hand is Donna Emilia, the Jewish mother-in-law of Suzanne, and on the other, Senator Alamanni, a Piedmontese social climber, the wealthy son of a war profiteer of the Risorgimento, married to a daughter of the nobility. In various relationships with this pillar of the government are many vivid types of exploiters, polite swindlers, parasites, and malefactors of great and little wealth, all safely within the arms of official protection and also within the law.

The expert Guicciarelli and his assistant Pietrucci further provide the author with opportunities for sharp satire. The Senator is a faker of the kind beloved in official circles, where orders and decorations are the most effective and cheapest payment for the devoted services such charlatans can render. When caught in a gross error of fact and judgment, this loyal servant gives a perfect performance of an official poltroon. We watch the two opposing camps intriguing and lying and shouting and profiting, while the mob gets its circus in the proceedings against Suzanne. Signor Ferrero reveals the genesis of the whole affair in a kitchen rivalry between two servants, Martina and Marietta. And it is Martina who revives the case, after Guicciarelli has blundered, by having Mariette, Suzanne's maid arrested. A letter is found on her which is used as evidence to compromise Alamanni's son Oliviero, whom Martina accuses of being Suzanne's lover and her accomplice in the murder.

Lieutenant Oliviero, who begins to emerge at the close as the central figure, is evidently the hero who gives the title "The Son's Revolt" to the second volume. He is undergoing his first serious disillusionment, and is disturbed in his peaceful life as a cavalry officer engaged in the immemorial pursuits of his species, a pretty mistress, horses, and gambling. In the last volume, I suspect, we shall meet him in a more chastened state preparing to redeem himself and to save democracy from the onslaughts of the Central European barbarians. But he is still in the eighteen nineties, so let us not anticipate. There was quite a lot for Oliviero to learn and for Guglielmo Ferrero to write about during the long and stirring years when, incredible as it may seem to the devotees of Fascism, Italy got along very well indeed without the coöperation of the then Bolshevik Mussolini. For the moment, the author rather invites us to contemplate "the two truths:" the actual facts of the Cavalieri case and the "truth" as generally accepted. There is a Pirandellian flavor to the title of this historian's first novel.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Biography

CASTLES IN THE AIR. By VIOLA TREE. Doran. 1926. $2.50.

If "Castles in the Air" contained nothing but the letter Bernard Shaw wrote its author while she was studying singing in Italy, the book would be worth while. It is a nice, long, and friendly letter and though it is full of the avuncular good advice expected of all *amis de famille*, it is witty—and dogmatic and "cocky," too. Shaw seems to consider complacently the fruits of his own musical culture, and what he thinks of singing teachers is expressed in no faltering terms. "The Italians," he declares, "as a rule, sing worse and teach infinitely worse than any other nation . . . the best technical singers come from—of all places—America and Australia." Well, well, well!

Miss Tree, who is a daughter of the eminent British actor, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, and a niece of that master-cartoonist, Max Beerbohm, tells in her book of her efforts to reach the top as an operatic singer. But alas, she did not even get a fair start. For her voice was not big enough to stand the terrific strain, and the very day of her debut (in "Salome," of all operas as Shaw might, and probably did, say) she broke completely and saw her aspirations all swept away.

"Castles in the Air" is a rather curious book. It is frank to the point of indiscretion sometimes, it is very dull in spots and very entertaining in others. Miss Tree's taste in including many of her love letters to her fiancé is undoubtedly to be questioned. However, they are circumspect enough, and if he did not care, why should anybody else?

There is a great mass of letters in the book, none being more charming than those from a group of young Oxford men all later killed in the World War. The most boring are those from Herbert Asquith, Lord Oxford.

Brought up in a brilliant and sophisticated world, Miss Tree was apparently thrown far more frequently into contact with personages than with mere persons. Her book is replete with references to or reminiscences, often intimate, of celebrities—"a young bass called Chaliapin" (then obviously not ready to let American managers know it would be $4,000 a performance or no Feodor), Bori, Destinn, Shaw, Richard Strauss, the Asquiths, Tosti, to mention only a few.

Drama

ONE-ACT PLAYS OF TODAY. Second Series. Selected by J. W. MARRIOTT. Small, Maynard. 1926. $2 net.

This second collection by Mr. Marriott of contemporary English one-act plays should prove as welcome as his first. The eleven plays included have pleasing variety. Most of them are by playwrights of established reputation, and have been tested by frequent production, several of them being already popular over here in little theatre circles. The most telling plays are those of the *genre* type,—from the Irish school Lady Gregory's little classic, "The Rising of the Moon," from Lancashire through Miss Horniman's theatre, the almost equally well known "Lonesomelike" of Harold Brighouse, and Stanley Houghton's delicious comment on middle-class greed, "The Dear Departed." In this group belong also "'Op-O-Me-Thumb," a wistful portrayal of a fanciful little laundry apprentice, and Harold Chapin's satire of ignorant sympathy, "It's the Poor That 'Elps the Poor," by far and away the outstanding piece of the volume, though here the editor apologizes for its inclusion, since technically Mr. Chapin was an American. Alfred Sutro is represented by a comedy-drama of sophisticated London society, L. N. Parker by a dramatization of W. W. Jacob's gripping tale "The Monkey's Paw," Sir Conan Doyle in a sketch telling of the death of an old soldier of Waterloo, which was acted by Henry Irving. The War serves as basis for Allan Monkhouse's impressive "Night Watches," and for a Christmas morality by Cicely Hamilton. From a new playwright, Olive Conway, comes a well told period play contrasting Puritan and court manners, "The King's Waistcoat," wherein the character of Lord Francis Webling will afford delight to the actor who enjoys the *finesse* of a Lovelace part.

In one aspect, then, this volume is most satisfactory as offering plays that are eminently actable, skilful in workmanship, sincere in purpose, and in good taste. They can indeed, as Mr. Marriott suggests in his Foreword, be well used in schools where "the newer method of teaching English by means of drama is to study good one-act plays written in contemporary idiom." In the aspect, however, as Mr. Marriott also states, and in which we agree, that "the one-act play is, in itself, an art-form as significant as the short story," this collection is most disappointing. It seems of the past, not of the vivid present. There is no fresh note here, either in contention or form, no fling of the imagination, no lift, no swift flashes of insight. Since the one-act form is as significant as the short story, why not in England a playwright Katherine Mansfield?

Fiction

WAYFARER. By KATHLEEN MILLAY. New York: William Morrow & Company. 1926. $2.

About half the way through, this novel strikes an authentic note and seems to grow up. Martha's loneliness on the Maine farm, her revolt against its unendurable grind and her longing to be out of it into the gaiety and laughter left behind in New York are all accurately seen and thoroughly realized. Moreover, her escape to the city with a lover, despite her affection for her kindly and devoted husband, and her joyous abandonment to its luxury and frivolity are somehow made to appear plausible. Less credible are Martha's inconsistencies of character, the motivation of her return to Maine, and her husband's attitude toward the whole escapade.

Unfortunately, before the turning point has been reached, some readers will have lost patience with the tale. Greenwich Village has had much to answer for in recent fiction, but seldom have its would-be sophisticates been more cruelly, albeit unconsciously, deprived of all semblance of grace and significance than in the first half of this novel. The empty-headed young villagers, monotonously preoccupied with food and philandering, who dispute the favor of John Bartlett, a rather unconvincing Maine farmer, lack charm, intelligence, and reality. Moreover, they commit the unpardonable sin—for villagers—of being dull.

However, the novel bravely attacks a number of prickly problems (mostly concerned with sex) and though its solutions often seem singularly immature, its style jerky—occasionally ungrammatical — and its characterizations founded on theory rather than experience, several poignant scenes in the second part show that the author possesses imagination and a sense of the dramatic as well as the courage to attempt a larger task than that for which she is as yet prepared.

THE EDGE OF ETERNITY. By AIDA RODMAN DE MILT. Reader Publications. 1926. $2.

The far-fetched main incident of this novel completely lacks accord with the prevailingly realistic manner in which most of the tale is written. A love-thwarted, disillusioned young man, Abbot Spencer, is crossing the Atlantic third class when he meets, as his cabin sharer, an old Swiss professor who is in a dying condition. The latter, before the end claims him, legally adopts the youth and entrusts to him a priceless, jealously guarded phial. He pledges Abbot to convey this phial to an obscure Alpine peak where for four years has lain, in a state of suspended animation, Trudi, the professor's granddaughter. Difficulties beset Abbot in the accomplishment of his mission, but in spite of all he is successful—the contents of the phial do their magic work, Trudi is restored to life, loves her intrepid rescuer, and becomes his bride. It would be mendacious to maintain that the story is very good.

THE WHITE MENACE. By JOHN RHODE. McBride. 1926. $2 net.

One of the best of the recent detective stories is this tale which was published in England under the title ASF—"artificem simulatoremque figurae." It describes the activities of a ring of dope smugglers and peddlers so powerful and so secret that almost the entire ruling class of England is undermined by drugs. The chief interest of the story lies not so much in the discovery of the man higher up, but in the methods of drug distribution which are ingenious and complicated to a degree.

(*Continued on next page*)

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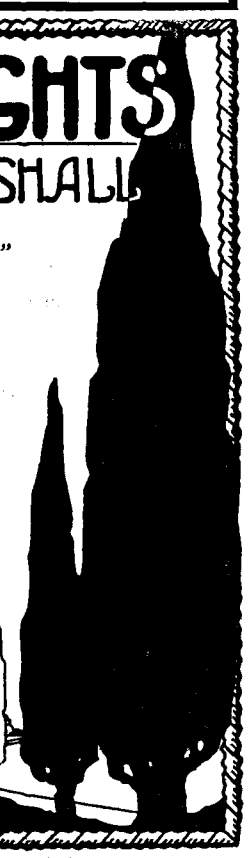

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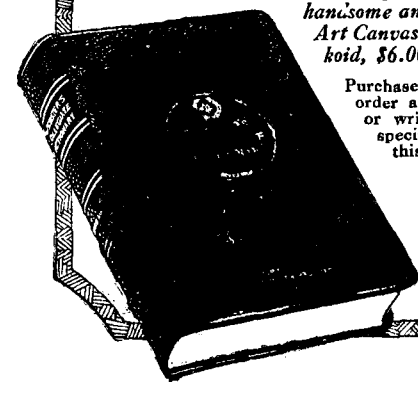

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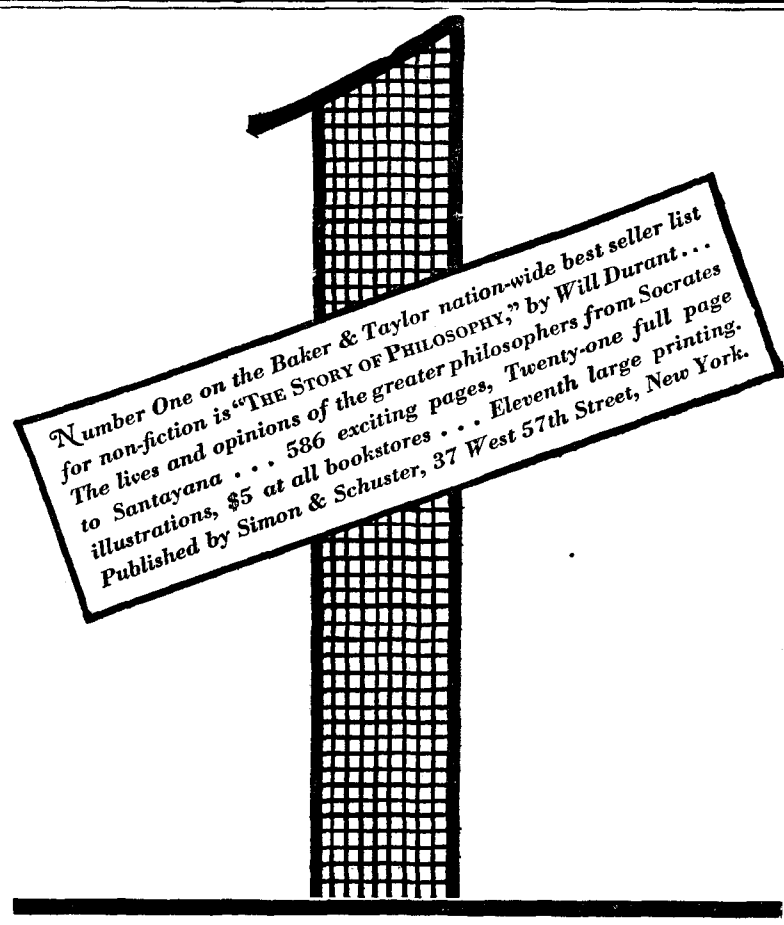
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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

FROM NINE TO NINE. By LEO PERUTZ. *New York. The Viking Press. 1926. $2.*

"From Nine to Nine" is a mystery story of a new type wherein there is a mystery, certainly, and a story, certainly, but so many other things as well that one almost loses sight of both story and mystery. The Anglo-Saxon mystery story of today has achieved an almost immutable pattern: there must be a crime, suspicion must dart hither and thither over a limited number of characters illuminating each in succession like a searchlight throwing one face after another into sudden relief, and finally there must be some strange quirk at the very end. The American product adheres closely to the model. It hews to the line, dispensing with characters in favor of certain definite types, and abjuring all hint of incident that is not absolutely vital to the development of the plot. The English version is a little more lax in its methods. Characters abound and even wax genial, a kind of chattyness on the part of the author is permitted although the business in hand, mystification followed by revelation, is never lost sight of.

But "Nine to Nine" is a continental importation and is a law unto itself. The Viennese hero plunges into a new circle of unrelated characters and disconnected adventures in almost every chapter. Just as you begin to think you know who the main personages of the plot are, they fade into the background and a new group holds the stage. It is a three-ring circus with any number of brass bands. There is a lavishness of detail and local color that makes it seem at times almost a collection of short stories about a single hero. Its only bond of union with the American mystery story lies in the presence of the final quirk. Perutz, the young German who is its author, has something of the flashing kaleidoscopic quality that marks the work of Wassermann and Capek, but "From Nine to Nine" is too slight an effort to be seriously compared with "Krakatit" or "Faber."

SEPIA. By OWEN RUTTER. Doran. 1926. $2.

"Sepia," in justification of its title, presents a strong admixture of brown in its color scheme. It is a tale of the Borneo jungle, with a background of brown natives from which certain individuals shading from pale cream to true sepia emerge to play their disastrous parts. There is no duskiness about the hero, however, a golden-haired Nordic in excellent form. This person, one Denis Prothero, a young Englishman, on arriving for service in Borneo is confronted at once with the disturbing custom of the country in the matter of "little brown housekeepers" for white men. The native parents willingly accept payment for these temporary liaisons with their daughters and all parties seem satisfied. But Denis is engaged to a girl back home, and in spite of terrible loneliness in the most remote of remote stations, he remains free from colored entanglement for three years. Then a combination of incidents, his white fiancée marrying another man, and a brown vampire risking her life to save his, breaks down his resistance and he instals the amber tinted native in his household. A few months and he closes the interlude by sending the girl back to her parents, but the ghost of this union without benefit of clergy arises for a reckoning after Denis's marriage. Although the "custom of the country" problem is the main theme of the story, there are vigorous descriptions of skirmishes, native uprisings, plots, and conspiracies, and the life of the British army officials in Borneo receives considerable attention. Judging from the titles of his other works and from internal evidence as well, Mr. Rutter has spent sufficient time in Borneo to know whereof he speaks.

THE WORLD OF WILLIAM CLISSOLD. By *H. G. Wells*. Doran. 2 vols. $5.

TENTACLES. By *Martha Kinross*. Harpers. $2.

THE PERILOUS ISLE. By *Octavia Roberts*. Harpers. $2.

DESERT. By *Martin Armstrong*. Harpers. $2.50.

THERE ARE LOVERS. By *Hilda Vaughan*. Harpers. $2.

MR. AND MRS. HADDOCK IN PARIS, FRANCE. By *Donald Ogden Stewart*. Harpers. $2.

THE QUIET LADY. By *Agnes Mure Mackenzie*. Doubleday, Page. $2 net.

THE BAR 20 RIDES AGAIN. By *Clarence E. Mulford*. Doubleday, Page. $2 net.

THE WHITE CIRCLE. By *Carroll John Daly*. Clode. $2 net.

THE FLAME OF COURAGE. By *George Gibbs*. Appleton. $2.

THE PORTRAIT OF ZELIDE. By *Geoffrey Scott*. Scribners. $2.50.

ROMANTIC I CALL IT. By *Ethel Harriman*. Boni & Liveright. $1.75.

THE CROMER STREET CHRONICLES. By *Norman Proctor Greig*. Dutton. $2.50.

Miscellaneous

A HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN PRISONS. 1926. Edited by AUSTIN H. MACCORMICK and PAUL W. GARRETT. Putnams. 1926.

This book furnishes data of the type not before accessible to the average student of penal problems. It is based on surveys made by such prison authorities as Thomas Mott Osborne and Dr. George W. Kirchwey of two federal prisons and nineteen state prisons located in the North Atlantic States. A comprehensive, frank, and authoritative report is made on each prison under the following headings: Plant, Officials, Prisoners, Discipline, Health, Industries, Education, Religion, Training in Citizenship, and Cost. The comments which close each report are constructively critical. Replies made by heads of institutions are included in the reports. The introduction to the book includes a discussion of the American prison system and the prison of the future. This book is to be followed by a second volume dealing with the remainder of the country.

THE SHIP UNDER SAIL. By E. KEBLE CHATTERTON. Lippincott. 1926.

CHATS ON NAVAL PRINTS. By E. KEBLE CHATTERTON. Stokes. 1926. $4.

Mr. Chatterton has already written at least nine books such as his well known "Sailing Ships and Their Story." The field is practically inexhaustible when an enthusiast turns to old log books, records, models, prints, and the like.

"The Ship Under Sail" is a beautifully printed volume, well planned and illustrated, with thirty-six plates on coated papers showing the evolution of the sailing ship. A folding scale drawing gives the spar and rigging plan of the latest sailing craft built in Great Britain, the Danish Schoolship *Kobenhavn*. The book is recommended as being in the best Chatterton manner.

"Chats on Naval Prints," sub-titled a "Practical Handbook for Collectors," is an extremely interesting contribution to the story of the sea. The old custom of making prints to commemorate great sea fights, discoveries, and vessels, has left us with a vast amount of valuable historical information. Mr. Chatterton makes available a thorough general survey of the most famous prints and their creators. The book is also beautifully illustrated and printed.

SMOKY. By *Will James*. Scribners. $2.50.

MODERN PUZZLES. By *Henry Ernest Dudeney*. Stokes. $1.25.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN MOTION PICTURE PLAYS. By *Jack Bechdolt*. $1.50.

THE ADVENTURES OF JOHNNY T. BEAR. By *Margaret J. McElroy*. Dutton.

RHEUMATISM: ITS MEANING AND ITS MENACE. By *Lewellys F. Barker* and *Norman B. Cole*. Appleton. $1.50.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL. By *A. M. Weyand*. Appleton. $3.

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF TASTE. By *Brillat-Savarin*. Doubleday, Page. $15.

FIFTY FAVOURITE OPERAS. By *Paul England*. Harpers. $5.

GOLF FOR YOUNG PLAYERS. By *Glenna Collett*. Little, Brown. $1.50 net.

THE BLUEBOOK OF COOKERY. By *Isabel Cotton Smith*. Literary Digest (Funk & Wagnalls). $2.50 net.

MAINLY ABOUT WOMEN. By *Alfred Edye*. Little, Brown. $1.50 net.

WHITETAILED DEER. By *William Monypeny Newson*. Scribners. $3.

Science

HOW INSECTS LIVE. By WALTER HOUSLEY WELLHOUSE. Macmillan. 1926. $5.

This is a simple text book of entomology which will prove of interest especially to the layman because of the clearness of the descriptions and the absence of much of the technical language of insect classification and structure. Unlike most text books in the subject, a comparatively few types are described in considerable detail, especially as to habits and activities. The author admits in his preface that he has frequently sacrificed scientific accuracy for the sake of simplicity but has always attempted to create a true impression in the reader's mind.

THE NEW NATURAL HISTORY. By J. ARTHUR THOMSON.

The second volume which has just appeared equals the first in appearance and interest. The ways of the more important groups of animals and the animals occurring in different kinds of environments are described. One portion of the book is devoted to the biology of the seasons.

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Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

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A BALANCED RATION

INTRODUCTION TO SALLY. By *"Elizabeth"* (Doubleday, Page.)

MOHAMMED. By *R. F. Dibble* (Viking.)

EAST WIND. By *Amy Lowell* (Houghton Mifflin.)

M. R., Asheville, N. C., asks for guidebooks to Paris and books about the city that will prepare an American for a stay of several months there.

I DON'T know when I have had such satisfaction from a guide to Paris as I have had this Summer from Watson White's "The Paris that is Paris" (Scribner). It is not a pocket encyclopedia, like the indispensable "Blue Guide" (Macmillan) —which covers everything and should be owned whatever else may be—but it gives one with time and inclination to discover the living past that means Paris, an easy and fascinating method of finding it in the midst of the Paris of today. Taking the old city by sections there is first a commentary on its history, with dramatically told stories of some of its more famous characters and events. For instance, I found here a record of the deadly activities of the Marquis de Brinvillers: there's a criminal for you, now. Then follows a "tour" through this district, visiting every trace that remains of the events recorded; these trips are taken almost step by step, as the beginner wishes to be taken in a foreign city. If you must ask a guardian to let you see some courtyard, Mr. White tells you the French phrase to use in asking him.

"The Paris That's Not in the Guidebooks," by Basil Woon (Brentano), is the city explored and exploited by the blonde lady whom of late so many gentlemen have preferred. Looking over its sparkling pages I marvel to find how little I know about this city, and how much, evidently, everyone else does. Paris takes a part of "Travel Charts and Travel Chats," by Frederick L. Collins (Bobbs-Merrill), an unusual and in its own way useful little book, which maps out and illustrates with diagrams what the writer did, and what it cost him to do it, in a brief stay in a number of famous cities. It need not be followed exactly to give good results, if one is planning a quick trip. Clara E. Laughlin's "So You're Going to Paris" (Houghton Mifflin) is one of a group of guides rapidly covering Europe, urged on by the demands of American travellers: it is spirited and practical.

"Old Time Paris," by George F. Edwards (Dutton) is another guide that the tourist with a short time to spend may use without a sense of being hurried; it arranges trips for six days. "Versailles: Its Life and History," by Cecelia Hill (Little, Brown), is an absorbing account of its tragic vicissitudes; this is a recent publication; "A Wanderer in Paris," by E. V. Lucas (Macmillan), having reached its nineteenth edition, appears in a revised version. "Dining in Paris" is a little book by Arthur Milton (McBride), whose "Seven Days" I have seen guiding many of my compatriots about the city of light. "Vistas," by Walter Stevens (Menteith), includes some interesting chapters on living in Paris in the Clinchy quarter, and in the volume "France to Scandinavia," in Frank Carpenter's "World Travels" (Doubleday, Page), there is together with any number of remarkably fine pictures and excellent travel advice, some unexpected information about apartment-renting after the war. "Paris of Today," by Ralph Nevill (Doran), is an insider's record of past and present fashionable and sporting society. I have already advised intending travellers to read Sisley Huddleston's "France and the French" (Scribner) especially if they seek a clue to the present-day political, economic, and financial tangle.

It may seem a curious time to print a list of guidebooks, when the tourist tide is turning Westward. But I am glad that the question, coming at this time, gave me a chance to remind intending travellers that the best time to read is before you start. For instance, Bainville's "History of France" (Appleton) need not be taken along under the arm but if you read it this winter it may make all the difference to your trip next year. I speak with feeling: I have been hearing some of my countrymen ask questions that must have made the custodians shiver if, being custodians, they listened to any language at all.

W. H., New York, is engaged in a study of Spengler's "Der Untergang des Abendlandes" and its relation to post-war thought. He asks if there have been any similar books on cycles of civilization; he has Flinders Petrie's book.

THE first volume of this book (which made a sensation in post-war Germany equalled only by Keyserling's "Reisebuch" and has since gone through some sixty editions there) has just been published by Knopf in a translation by C. F. Atkinson, as "The Decline of the West." In the year it appeared, 1918, there were reasons why a theory that all Western nations were shooting down a chute toward the dump should have been welcomed by one apparently about to make the first landing there. But in the years that have followed an immense literature of controversy has gathered about the work in Germany, which this student will no doubt investigate: as a starting point he might try "Spengler's Geschichts-Philosophie," by Carl Schück (Karlsruhe, 1921) and "Untergang oder

(*Continued on next page*)

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Readers' Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Aufstieg der Abendländischer Kultur," by Franz Köhler (Munich, 1921).

Going but a few years back one may get together an important list of works offering a theory a philosophy, of the course of civilization. "The Philosophy of Civilization," by Albert Schweitzer, has appeared in an English translation (Macmillan, 1923) in two parts: "Decay and Restoration of Civilization" and "Civilization and Ethics." There is "The Economic Interpretation of History," by Ernest R. A. Seligman (Columbia University Press, 1924), and "The Spiritual Interpretation of History," (Harvard University Press, 1916), in which Shailer Mathews sets forth the factors that seem to him underestimated in a purely economic explanation, such as personality, uneconomic passions and moral, religious, and æsthetic ideals. "Divine Aspects of History," by J. R. Mozley (Putnam, 2 vols., 1916) is a sketch of world history to vindicate the main currents of Biblical teaching as unique in spiritual truth. One might well include that strong strange, and subterranean book, Winwood Reade's "The Martyrdom of Man," which Dutton is bringing out in a new edition, the twentieth, I believe: it is one of those books whose popularity runs like an underground river: you do not often see it in bookstores, nor is it advertised save as now and again someone of importance comes upon it and demands with enthusiasm to be told how long this has been going on. In "Prolegomena of History" (University of California), F. J. Teggart shows its relation to literature, philosophy, and science, and in "The Processes of History" (Yale University Press) he shows how a strict application of the methods of science may be made to the factors and processes, human and geographical, of history. The fourth edition of "The Passing of the Great Race," by Madison Grant (Scribner), has an extensive documentary supplement made necessary by the clamor for "authorities" that arose as soon as this study of the "racial basis of European history" came to the eyes of scholars. "The Trend of History," by W. K. Wallace (Macmillan), shows the origins of twentieth century problems; it is a book not to be left out of a survey such as this, nor is Francis Sidney Marvin's "Unity of Western Civilization" (Oxford University Press).

As this student reads German, he may make a side excursion through the book whose theory of civilization made in its time a stir something like that later aroused by Spengler's—Houston Stewart Chamberlain's "Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts." I think it has not been translated. And if he reads other languages he may add to this list "Filosofia de la Historia y Teoria de la Civilizacione," by Altamaria y Creva (Madrid 1916), and "Saggio di una Conscizione Idealistica della Storia," by M. Cassotti (Firenze, 1929).

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Correspondence of Descartes and Constantyn Huygens, 1635-1647. *Edited by Leon Roth.*

This precious collection, edited from the manuscripts now in the Bibliotheque Nationale, consists of 126 holograph letters and documents, of which little more than a quarter have been published. Much supplementary material and other hitherto unpublished documents, together with full explanatory notes, are included. Price $14.00.

The Diary of a Country Parson. *The Reverend James Woodforde. Vol. II. Edited by John Beresford.*

Parson Woodforde takes his place beside Pepys and Evelyn, as revealed in this journal with undoubted charm. In this second volume the extracts are almost continuous and show us the daily life of the Woodfordes through the years 1782 to 1787. The first volume (published in 1924) is from 1758 to 1781. Price $4.25.

Ancient Furniture. *By Gizela M. A. Richter.*

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Points of View

Marco Polo

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

The "Travels of Marco Polo" received sympathetic notice in *The Saturday Review* last August. Marco Polo is a name that always catches my attention, on account of my having lived in Western China for over a year, and having followed his track in places. As I recall those peaceful days, before the Chinese revolution, memories arise of weeks spent walking along the stone-paved roads or carried in a sedan chair. Other days are recalled, spent lingering in the walled cities, exploring their temples, photographing their monuments, watching and studying the complex and busy life of their inhabitants. Before my mind's eye arise lofty pagodas, richly sculptured memorial arches, roomy temples and great stone bridges. It is not true that all the features worth seeing in Western China are due to the natural diversity and luxuriant vegetation of a highly cultivated country. Western China has its architectural monuments. Especially fine and interesting are the bridges. Marco Polo and all the travelers since him have dilated upon their beautiful and substantial character, claiming them superior to those found in almost any other portion of China. When the Venetian visited the Chentu plain over 600 years ago, he wrote: "For here the bridges have very handsome roofs, constructed of wood, ornamented with paintings of a red color, and covered with tiles." Many a time has the writer crossed precisely such a structure. Every feature was there, even to the paintings. Of course they were not the same as those that Marco saw, for they have fallen in decay. But the old bridges have been rebuilt; the old styles have been kept up. While many of the bridges are roofed, many are not; there is a great variety of design; the surroundings are always different; and consequently the traveler has something fresh and novel to see and admire in each.

Any candid person who follows Polo's track will be convinced of the truth of your reviewer's words, that "he was a keen observer. His mind was photographic." The things that interested Marco Polo were man and his works.

ROGER SPRAGUE.

Imola, California.

Gozzoli Pictures

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*.
SIR:

I want to tell you that the Benozzo Gozzoli picture, of which Christopher Morley writes in "The Romany Stain," may be seen in this country *in toto*, and of full size. I say it may be *seen* for the copy owned by the Fogg Museum of Art of Harvard University is so excellent that one virtually beholds the original. It was painted not by an ordinary copyist but by an artist who has given his life to such work and whose marvellous fidelity in the reproduction of his originals has amazed the most competent judges. Perhaps you know all this, but even people who go much to Boston, and indeed to Cambridge, often, I find, lack knowledge of what the Fogg Museum might show them. The picture was bought some years ago by the directors of the museum as giving an unusual chance for stay-at-homes to understand what painting of that period really was. It hangs over the platform in the large lecture room, and can be covered by a sheet when other things are to be shown there. If you happen to be in Boston you should not fail to see it; and if you should go that far for this purpose only, I do not think you would be disappointed. Copy though it is, it is one of the most beautiful things in this country, and one of the most informative, if I may use that word, of the revelation it must be to unaccustomed eyes. Thanking you once more for the pleasure I have drawn from your book, I am

M. G. VAN RENSSELAER.

Tannersville, N. Y.

An Ill-Treated Tale

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

If reminders of neglected books are still in order, let me put in a vote for Mathilde Eiker's "Mrs. Mason's Daughters." It was published only a couple of years ago and received the excellent notices it deserved; but for some reason the larger public appears to have neglected it. The book was a little heavy, to be sure, but the weight was not mere ballast; it contained a good deal of substance, and dealt with a theme that certainly ought to interest millions of readers—the business woman who wishes she could have everything. Charles G. Norris and A. S. M. Hutchinson have smeared that topic with raw sentiment, and they found many readers; possibly Miss Eiker has been neglected because she saw fit to treat it with irony.

ELMER DAVIS.

New York.

"Show Boat"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
Sir:

Professional book reviewers and the dear serious minded and quite intellectual critics obviously will fail to see the one sharp pointed spike Edna Ferber drives in "Show Boat."

One can margin the statement in safety for theirs were not eyes to behold the principal design woven into "So Big."

My acquaintance with Miss Ferber is the meager acquaintance anyone may have from an not incautious reading of some of her works over a period of years. Consequently I do not know whether she weaves instinctively and with eyes tight shut, or with an intent that is completely conscious.

In "So Big" she selected an interesting Chicago background and carefully etched thereon, in clean narrative form the effect of the dominating, capable, maternal mind on the slowly developing thought of a child. As everyone knows, the result, of course, is neutralization. Successful mama—unsuccessful child, now and always *in a given set of conditions*. Miss Ferber handled the pattern deftly and surely, so I assume for want of information to the contrary, that her pen drew a design already conceived.

As entertainment "Show Boat," to me, has much to offer that "So Big" lacked. As to the aforementioned and completely ignored "spike"—let your thoughts drift back lazily down the series of incidents from which "Show Boat" is drawn and presently you will realize—but you, I assume, already have—that "Show Boat" treats the "human scene" as a movie. Properly so. Human existence once lived and recorded becomes a mere fable, a ghost without substance—in short, a delusion. You will notice that the people who move through and in and out of this tale, are untouched by any but their own views and these are often as shiftingly changeful as the sands of the sea.

Patently the Mississippi is this book's "hero," if all books must have a hub or haunch or him. Yessir, and what does Miss Ferber say of the Mississippi and what do her characters when the yellow slumberer yawns and stretches and grows restless and when deep channels abdicate for sand bars?

I would say Miss Ferber's picture is not lacking in good outline and detail. One hopes that she wrote "Show Boat" premeditatedly and with malice aforethought.

RICHARD C. BURRITT.

Chicago Daily News.

"A Tillyloss Scandal"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In answer to Mrs. Crowell's note in your issue of the 14th inst. J. M. Barrie is the author of "A Tillyloss Scandal." This originally appeared in *Good Words* for January and February, 1890—a monthly magazine in London, England.

Possibly Mrs. Crowell may have reference to the volume entitled "A Tillyloss Scandal," published in the '90s by Lovell, Coryell & Co., N. Y., which contained the word as it appeared in *Good Words*, and some other sketches by Barrie.

Barrie has never to my knowledge disowned authorship. Why should he?

A reference to these sketches by the author is prefixed to "The Thistle Edition," of his works, published by Messrs. Scribner—in which he disowns the edition published by Messrs. Lowell—and others.

W. MAC DONALD MACKAY.

Toronto, Canada.

More Titles

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I would like to add the names of a few books, little known or neglected, to the lists already published in your Correspondence Columns:

"Super Flumina," "Angling Observations of a Coarse Fisherman," John Galt's "The Entail," Mrs. Gaskell's "Sylvia's Lovers," George Bourne's "Change in the Village," John Halsham's "Idlehurst," and "Kitty Fairhall."

A. K. GIBSON.

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The World of Rare Books

By Frederick M. Hopkins

THE PLEIAD" PUBLICATIONS

WE have received the announcement of the proposal to issue under the name of "The Pleiad" a number of volumes designed especially for the collector of finely designed and printed books. The texts have been chosen with the double motive of literary interest and typographic opportunity. The volumes, in every detail of fine book production, will receive the utmost care. In order to secure variety with excellence, they will be printed at different presses on the Continent of Europe. This will assure a wider range of style and choice of type than any one press can furnish, however rich its resources. Aided by the modest costs of continental production, the printer is expected to keep the price of each book as low as may be consistent with the finest craftsmanship, and the edition will in each case be limited to a small number of copies. No more than four books will appear in one year.

The text of the first book will be Plato's Socratic dialogue "Crito" in Henry Cary's translation. The attempt of the publishers has been to give this moving and dramatic dialogue a form worthy of its content. The new "Vincenza" type, used for the first time, will, it is hoped, afford a suitable frame for the profession of faith of the greatest martyr of all antiquity. The edition will be limited to 475 numbered copies printed on specially made paper at the Officina Bodoni under the direction of Frederic Warde. Half of the edition will be for America, and half for England. The copies issued in London will be identical with those issued in New York. The book is medium octavo in size, bound in boards covered with special hand-marbled paper and the back tipped with goat vellum top and bottom. The printing has been done at the Officina Bodoni at Montagnola di Lugano, Switzerland, a press which by reason of its perfection ranks among the foremost in Europe. The details of design and production have been in the hands of Frederic Warde, well known to amateurs of fine printing on both sides of the Atlantic, as one of the foremost American typographers. The American edition, we understand, will be sold by Harper & Brothers.

Later there will appear the interesting 'Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Women" by William Godwin, transcribed and with an introduction by John Middleton Murry. The reprint follows exactly the rare second edition published in 1798.

"The Pleiad" publications will make an interesting typographical experiment that will be closely watched by lovers of finely printed books. It is in highly competent hands from start to finish. Mr. Warde appears to have a great opportunity and his many friends in both America and England wish him the greatest success.

HOUDINI'S LIBRARY

THE collecting world will probably be surprised to learn that Houdini, the magician, is a genuine bibliomaniac, whose library is insured for $350,000, and who spends all his spare time in hunting new material for it. And yet this is the case, according to the Boston *Transcript*, which contains a long article describing his literary treasures.

The Transcript, an authority on bibliographical topics, says that Houdini's collection of books on the drama is one of the largest and finest in the world, and that he, too, has probably the greatest collection in existence pertaining to witchcraft, spiritualism, and psychic phenomena. In addition, he is entitled to distinction for the collection of autograph letters and manuscripts which he has brought together.

The dramatic collection contains much material from the libraries of Everett Jansen Wendell, Augustin Daly, Todtburg, Bement, Vail, Evans, and others sold during the last twenty-five years. It is said that it contains 300,000 theater programs, many of historical interest, gathered from all over the world. A fortunate incident in the accumulation of his dramatic collection was the assistance given him by Alfred Becks, an oldtime actor and student of the literature of the stage. Becks was a bibliomaniac and he helped to sharpen the appetite of Houdini who employed him as librarian and private secretary.

The collection of material relating to magic, witchcraft and spiritualism is perhaps the greatest in the world. It contains more than 20,000 books and pamphlets purchased from Symonds, the editor of the *Banner of Light*, a now defunct spiritualistic paper published in Boston. Houdini says: "I walked into Schelle's antiquarian shop in Stuttgart, Germany, and when I asked him where his books relating to magic were, he pointed to the wall. After a glance I said, 'How much will you take for the whole stock?' and I bought four packing cases of these books." In Edinburgh he walked into a bookshop and bought the entire stock on the fourth floor. The greatest single addition to this portion of his library was obtained through the purchase of the library of Henry Evans Evankon, a world famous specialist in his line. Other important purchases included the libraries of Hunter and Goldston of London; the complete Xundarz library from Australia; the Wiljalra Frikell library of Dresden; the Remignins Alburs library of Philadelphia; and the Hagan, Dunninger, and Becker libraries of New York. As magic and the allied arts are presumed to have originated in the Orient, he has a special section of Chinese, Hindu, and Egyptian records.

The Houdini library contains thousands of autograph letters and many valuable manuscripts. There are a large number of letters written by Richard Mansfield, Clyde Fitch, Edwin Booth, Edmund Kean, Jenny Lind, Mrs. Siddons, and scores of others connected with the stage during the last two hundred years. The manuscripts include the original diary of David Garrick, the correspondence of Charles Macklin, and much similar material by or relating to other great actors.

Evidently Houdini takes the greatest pride in his collection relating to magic, witchcraft, and spiritualism, for he has willed this portion of his library, including letters, documents and manuscripts concerning these subjects, to the National Museum in Washington. Thus the possibility of this rare material being scattered by sale at auction has already been eliminated.

NOTE AND COMMENT

MARY E. PHILLIPS'S work entitled "Edgar Allan Poe—The Man," in two volumes, with a foreword by J. H. Whitty, has just been published by the John C. Winston Company of Philadelphia. Miss Phillips has spent years in the preparation of this work, which is said to clear up many mysteries in the poet's life, her research extending over every place where he resided. It is stated that two-thirds of the material is new and that the two volumes contain over 500 illustrations.

Henry George's daughter, Mrs. William C. de Mille, recently presented to the New York Public Library the books and papers in her possession relating to her father, including his letters, diaries, manuscripts, and many printed volumes and scrapbooks. To make this collection easily available to readers and students, a bibliography has been prepared and printed in the *Library Bulletin*, including a list of the Henry George manuscripts, a list of all his printed works in the library, a representative collection of critical writings, and a section concerning the general theory and application of the single tax. All articles listed in "Poole's Index" and other indexes to periodicals are found in this bibliography. Moreover, many other periodicals, American and foreign, which are not elsewhere indexed have been examined for additional articles. Books by contemporaries of Henry George have been searched for chapters, or even brief comment, upon the man and his work, both by admirers and opponents.

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The Phoenix Nest

THE theatre doesn't figure very largely in our summer playing around, though we did have a good time at "The Scandals," what with *Harry Richmond's* popping up ever and anon, and finally to sing "The Birth of the Blues," leading up to *George Gershwin's* "Rhapsody in Blue,"—and what with *Ann Pennington's* dancing "The Black Bottom." Which reminds us of the announcement that "Strike up the Band," by *George S. Kaufman* and *George Gershwin*, is to be "an attack on the professional flag-waver," even as Kaufman and *Marc Connelly* sharpshot at the go-getter in "Beggar on Horseback." The Kaufman-Gershwin affair is being rehearsed by *Edgar Selwyn*. And that doesn't necessarily remind us of melodrama, —but just the same, the only two plays we cared anything about have been the two melodramas, "The Ghost Train" and "The Donovan Affair," which latter we saw most recently. The program told us not to give away the solution, so we ain't goin' to, but the play was fast and furious with melodramatic thrills. There's life in the *Owen Davis* yet. . . .

After the death of his father in Sauk Centre, *Sinclair Lewis* left his summer workshop on a Minnesota lake and is now in New York. We hear that the half-completed manuscript of his new novel contains a story that is one of the best he has ever written. It's possible that the Lewises may spend the winter in Washington, D. C. . . .

One of the most attractively-made books we have seen on the froth of the fall torrent is "Sutter's Gold," by *Blaise Cendrars*, translated from the French by *Henry Longan Stuart*. And not only is this a beautiful book, but Cendrars's account of the days of '49 and "The New Helvetia" is an epic in prose. We notice that the editor of *Hearst's International* has thought as much, and features what must be at least part of this book in the latest issue of that magazine, under a more ordinary title, with copious striking illustrations, we think by *Dean Cornwell*. But the beautiful decorations for the book, designed and cut on wood by *Harry Cimino*, are our favorites. . . .

John Dos Passos appreciates Cendrars. For all we know he may have introduced the work of the adventurer to Harpers' who publish the book. Dos Passos knows Cendrars's poetry. Dos himself, stopped working on a new play long enough to write a pamphlet which will be distributed by the Civil Liberties Union in defense of *Sacco* and *Vanizetti*, the two Italians who claim that the murder charge against them is an anti-Communist conspiracy. And, by the way, Dos's latterly produced and now published play, "The Garbage Man," will be put on the stage in Prague in the near future. . . .

Joseph Lewis French sends us some verses of a dream that lately came to him out of jabberwocky-land. We have only room to print two:

The roes hung on the herring-tree
And slyly nocked the norn
The raving roaring ravelin
The xebec and the zorn.

The xanthus joshed the jimplecute
The aardvark hugged the auk
The woozle woggled in and out
To snare the stubenrauch

And that's what the dictionary does to you! . . .

Of *Zona Gale's* "Preface to a Life" we hear fine things. And also of *Ellen Glasgow's* "The Romantic Comedians." These two women, with much achievement behind them, seem to be doing their best work at this stage. . . .

Lord Bryce was, perhaps, the most popular of British ambassadors. A new life of him has been written by his old friend, *H. A. L. Fisher* of Oxford, which Macmillan is bringing out. Hindleap, the Bryces' country home in Ashdown Forest, was beloved of the Ambassador, and wherever he traveled he was forever on the lookout for some new flower or fern for his garden there. . . .

A new novel recommended by *Edward Garnett* is *H. E. Bates's* "The Two Sisters" (Viking Press). *Miss Mary Pendered*, an English novelist, early encouraged Mr. Bates about his work, But Mr. Garnett really discovered him. He brought him to the attention of Jonathan Cape, the English publisher and also (being English literary adviser to the Viking Press), informed them of the work. He has written an introduction to the book. . . .

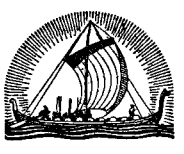
Another interesting volume from the longship of the Vikings, if you care to ask "Quo Vadis?" of literature, is *Edwin Muir's* "Transitions: Essays on Contemporary Literature." We have just read one of Muir's papers, the last in the book, as it appeared in *The Nation*. That one was on *Robert Graves*,—but Muir has also done *Joyce, Lawrence, Stephen Hudson, Huxley, Edith Sitwell, Strachey, T. S. Eliot* and *Virginia Woolf*, among others. . . .

The *Condé Nast* publications are moving next April to the new Graybar building, from their old offices at 19 West 44th Street. The Graybar is now rising just east of the Grand Central. It will have a forty-four-foot concourse leading into the station. As the Condé Nast plant for printing, shipping, storage and binding is out at Greenwich, Connecticut, the new location will facilitate business between it and the editorial departments. The Graybar building, when completed, will be the largest office building above ground in the world. . . .

Edwin Valentine Mitchell, the wholehearted Hartford bookseller, whose *Book Notes* is always so welcome in this office, has been doing so well selling the "New Poems and Old" of *Muriel Stuart*, cracked up by *Henry Savage* as the greatest English woman poet living today, that a second big printing of the book is assured. Meanwhile Muriel writes on *Shakespeare's* "Dull Women" in *Book Notes*. She says they were "beautiful ice cream blocks." She says Desdemona "was the prototype of *E. M. Dell's* sugar-coated dolls." She says, "anything so spineless, so futile, demanded a pillow on her face." She finds Juliet impossible also, and Cordelia irritating. "Always in the right. Always ready with an answer for tiresome old papa. Always putting her sisters in the wrong." She says Shakespeare was not interested in the true female type. Compare any of his heroines with *Webster's* "Duchess of Malfi." "There is a live, lovely, flesh and blood lady." And Cleopatra, Miss Stuart thinks, stands out head and shoulders above any other woman in the Shakespearian gallery, because Shakespeare liked best the "splendid male-female, fellow fighter, fellow roysterer, fellow drinker; a tiger in her passions, a great royal jade." . . .

So much for Buckingham! . . .

THE PHŒNICIAN.



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